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CONTENTS

25 February 1991

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

WARSAW PACT AFFAIRS

1 Apr Envisaged for Pact Military Dissolution *[TASS]* 1
Bessmertnykh, Yazov Attend Budapest Pact Talks *[TASS]* 1
  Arrive in Budapest 24 Feb 1
  Bessmertnykh Meets Counterparts 1
  Meeting Opens 25 February 1
Hungarian Official Cited on Security Guarantees *[Moscow Radio]* 1
Pact Dissolution's Security Importance Viewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 22 Feb]* 2

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

United States & Canada

U.S. Response to Soviet Gulf Peace Plan Viewed 4
  'Irritation' With Plan 'Obvious' *[Moscow Radio]* 4
  Differences Considered 'Natural' *[Moscow TV]* 4
  U.S. 'Profound Skepticism' Viewed *[TASS]* 4
'Patience' Needed for Improving Ties With U.S. *[Moscow International]* 5
Economist Criticizes Defense Budget Comparison *[PRAVDA 15 Feb]* 5

China

Commentary Views Possible MiG-29 Sale to PRC *[Moscow International]* 6

Northeast Asia

Planning for Gorbachev Visit to Japan Under Way *[Moscow International]* 6
'Team Spirit' Disrupted DPRK-ROK Talks *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* 7
DPRK's Suspension of Talks With ROK Viewed *[Moscow International]* 8

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Commentary Views 1986 Manila Uprising, Results *[Moscow International]* 8
Commentary Views Philippine-U.S. Bases Talks *[Moscow International]* 9

Near East & South Asia

Government Statement Issued on Ground War *[TASS]* 9
Ignatenko Briefs Press 22 Feb on Gulf Plan 10
  Outlines 'Tightened Up' Document *[TASS]* 10
  Iraqi Response Expected 'Any Hour' *[TASS]* 10
  On Gorbachev-Bush Phone Call *[TASS]* 11
  Praises 'Partnership' With U.S. *[Moscow TV]* 11
TASS Details Gorbachev-Bush 22 Feb Phone Call 11
Churkin Details Negotiations With 'Aziz on Gulf *[TASS]* 12
Primakov Views Talks With 'Aziz, Gorbachev Plan *[Moscow TV]* 12
Iraq's 'Aziz Holds News Conference, Departs 13
  Expresses Support for Peace Plan *[TASS]* 13
  Departs After News Conference *[TASS]* 14
Ignatenko Briefs Press 23 Feb on Gulf 14
  Outlines Efforts To Avert War *[TASS]* 14

  Believes Iraqi Attitude Will Change *[TASS]* 14
Gorbachev Call to Japan's Kaifu Described *[Tokyo KYODO]* 15
Gandhi Views Gulf War, Talks With Gorbachev *[TASS]* 15
Vorontsov Briefs Perez de Cuellar on Peace Talks *[TASS]* 16
  Speaks at Security Council *[TASS]* 16
Syrian Defense Minister on Saddam's 'Schemes' *[Moscow TV]* 16
Defense Ministry Denies Military Delegation in Iraq *[TASS]* 17
Chemical Troops Chief on CW Use in Gulf War *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 23 Feb]* 17
NHK Interviews Ignatenko on Peace Proposal *[Tokyo TV]* 18
Commentaries, Reports View Ground Offensive 19
  PRAVDA on Battle, Baghdad Situation *[25 Feb]* 19
  Diplomacy Not 'Ruled Out' *[IZVESTIYA 25 Feb]* 20
  'Fine Slogans' Hide 'Selfish Aims' *[PRAVDA 25 Feb]* 20
  Need for Diplomacy Stressed *[Moscow International]* 22
  U.S. Said Pursuing Own Goals *[Moscow International]* 22
  War May Provoke 'Unexpected' Change *[Moscow International]* 23
  Logic of War Gained 'Upperhand' *[TASS]* 23
Commentaries, Reports View Soviet Peace Plan 24
  Soviet Initiative Failure Viewed *[Moscow TV]* 24
  PRAVDA Sees Plan as Settlement Basis *[23 Feb]* 24
  TASS Comment on Settling Conflict 25
  'Difficult To Explain' Continuing War *[TASS]* 25
  Plan Opens Path for 'Serious' Talk *[TASS]* 26
  Radio Says Plan Encourages Optimism *[Radio Peace and Progress]* 26
  ISQA Program Discusses Peace Plan *[Moscow Radio]* 27
NEW TIMES Views Saddam Husayn's Motives *[12-18 Feb]* 28

East Europe

Visegrad Summit Meeting's Aims Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 16 Feb]* 30

West Europe

Premier Pavlov Receives German Bank Official *[TASS]* 31
Bessmertnykh Interviewed Before Madrid Visit *[IZVESTIYA 22 Feb]* 31

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Supreme Soviet

Gorbachev Nominates Candidates for Ministries *[TASS]* 32
Republic Decision on Referendum Declared Invalid *[TASS]* 32
Committees Discuss Warsaw Pact Reform 22 Feb *[TASS]* 32
  Dzasokhov on Pact's Dissolution *[Moscow TV]* 32
Interregional Group Statement on South Ossetia *[IZVESTIYA 22 Feb]* 33
  Deputy Explains Stance *[IZVESTIYA 22 Feb]* 33
Alksnis' Call for Change in Status Rejected *[IZVESTIYA 20 Feb]* 34
Supreme Soviet Resolution on Price Reforms *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* 34
Pavlov Cited on Prices, Bessmertnykh on Gulf *[IZVESTIYA 21 Feb]* 35

Political & Social

400,000 Attend Pro-Yeltsin Rally in Moscow *[Moscow Radio]* 38
  Further on Rally *[Radio Rossii]* 38
  Demonstration Set for 10 Mar *[Radio Rossii]* 38
  'Alternative' Rally Held in Leningrad *[PRAVDA 25 Feb]* 39
CPSU Secretariat Preparing for Union Referendum *[TASS]* 39
Pugo on Riga, Vilnius Enquiries Slow Progress *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 20 Feb]* 40
Radio on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Open Confrontation *[Moscow International]* 40
Gorbachev Centrist Position Examined *[NEW TIMES 12-18 Feb]* 41
Trade Unions Support Referendum Vote for Unity *[TASS]* 43

- Kryuchkov on Yeltsin Ruble Scam Allegations *[PRAVDA 23 Feb]* ... 43
- KGB Use of Psychiatry Eyed *[NEW TIMES No 6]* ... 44
- West's Cure For Economic Ills Viewed *[NEW TIMES No 6]* ... 46
- Kravchenko Attends Republic Broadcasters Meeting *[Moscow TV]* ... 48
- Armed Men Arrested in Kemerovo Oblast *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 Feb]* ... 49
- Finnish Court Rules To Extradite Hijacker *[TASS]* ... 49
- New TV Program To Cover Military Issues *[PRAVDA 22 Feb]* ... 49

Economic

- Gorbachev Holds Meeting on Food Supplies *[TASS]* ... 49
- Pavlov Comments on Reforming Economy *[TASS]* ... 49
  - Regrets Interview's Interpretation *[TASS]* ... 50
  - News Conference Detailed *[Moscow TV]* ... 51
- Pavlov's Economic Concepts Criticized *[Moscow International]* ... 51
- Kryuchkov Denies KGB Organized Rubles Deal *[Moscow International]* ... 51
- Congress Work out Economy Switch Mechanics *[IZVESTIYA 20 Feb]* ... 52
- ASTEC Committee Meeting Results Assessed *[SELSKAYA ZHIZN 20 Feb]* ... 52

Agricultural

- Government Agrees to Buy More Grain *[Moscow Radio]* ... 53
- Voronezh Starts Allocating Land to Peasants *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* ... 53
- KGB Success in Combating Illegal Exports *[PRAVDA 1 Feb]* ... 54

Military

- Leaders Attend 22 Feb Meeting Marking Army Day *[TASS]* ... 54
  - Kochetov Report Denies Coup Ideas *[Moscow TV]* ... 54
- Yazov Issues Order for Marking Army, Navy Day *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 22 Feb]* ... 55
- Yazov Hands Out State Awards To Mark Army Day *[Moscow Radio]* ... 55
- Yazov Lays Wreath at Unknown Soldier's Tomb *[Moscow Radio]* ... 55
- 23 Feb Military Rally in Moscow Marks Army Day ... 56
  - Rumors Abound About Rally *[Moscow TV]* ... 56
  - Chairman Insists No Weapons Taken to Rally *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 22 Feb]* ... 56
  - Thousands Reportedly Attend *[Radio Rossii]* ... 57
  - 'Hundreds of Thousands' Attend *[Moscow Radio]* ... 57
  - Streets Cordoned off by Police *[Radio Rossii]* ... 57
- Yeltsin Greets Armed Forces on Army, Navy Day *[Moscow Radio]* ... 57
- Leningrad Holds Army-Navy Day Rally *[Moscow Radio]* ... 57
- 'Alternate' Rally at Army Day March Noted *[Moscow TV]* ... 58
- Armed Forces Chief on Military Tasks *[Moscow Radio]* ... 58
- Yazov Interviewed on Army, Navy Day *[PRAVDA 23 Feb]* ... 60
- Deputy Defense Minister on Army, Navy Day *[Moscow TV]* ... 64
- Akhromeyev Discusses Military Affairs *[Moscow Domestic]* ... 65
- Official Interviewed on Military Reform *[Moscow International]* ... 66
- Military Figure on Media's 'Anti-Army Campaign' *[Moscow Radio]* ... 67
- Alksnis Discusses Unity, Salvation Committee *[Moscow Radio]* ... 67
- Soyuz Leader Comments on Army's Political Role *[Moscow TV]* ... 68

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Baltic Republics

- Sajudis Warns of Impending Military Action *[Radio Vilnius]* ... 69
- Vilnius Rally Shows Support for Soviet Troops *[Moscow TV]* ... 69
  - Army Day Meeting 'Circus' *[Radio Vilnius]* ... 69
  - Soviet Soldiers Termed 'Invaders' *[Radio Vilnius]* ... 69
- Vigilantes Established in Vilnius Factories *[Vilnius International]* ... 70
- Lithuania Sets Terms for Moscow Talks *[IZVESTIYA 21 Feb]* ... 70
  - Delegation Views Talks With USSR *[TASS]* ... 70

- Sweden Rejects Diplomatic Ties With Lithuania *[TASS]* ... 70
- Lithuania's Vagnorius on Price Reform *[Vilnius International]* ... 71
- Lithuanian CP Statement Defends Ideology Chief *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* ... 71
- Lithuanian Television, Radio Status Viewed *[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY No 7]* ... 71
- Lithuanian Ethnic Minorities Law Amended *[EKHO LITVY 1 Feb]* ... 72
- 'Many Thousands' Attend Riga Army Rally *[Moscow Radio]* ... 73
  - OMON Calls for Return to 'Old Order' *[Riga Radio]* ... 73
  - 'Foreign Army' Festivities Noted *[Riga Radio]* ... 73
  - Army Day 'Battles' Predicted *[Riga Radio]* ... 73
- Latvia Begins Polling on Referendum 24 Feb *[TASS]* ... 74
  - Gorbunovs on Poll, Yeltsin *[Riga Radio]* ... 74
- Baltic Command To Insure Referendum in Jurmala *[Riga Radio]* ... 75
- Kuzmin Welcomes Contacts With Latvians *[TASS]* ... 75
  - Details Harassment at TV Center *[IZVESTIYA 23 Feb]* ... 75
- Estonia, Iceland Premiers Sign Joint Statement *[Tallinn Radio]* ... 76
- Iceland Plans To Open Bureau in Estonia *[TASS]* ... 76
- Savisaar Addresses Independence Day Celebration *[Moscow Radio]* ... 76
- Estonian Poll on Republic Status Held 24 Feb *[TASS]* ... 77
  - Majority in Sillamaye Support Union *[TASS]* ... 77
- Estonian Communists Offer Alternative Poll *[Tallinn Radio]* ... 77
  - Servicemen To Participate *[Moscow TV]* ... 77
- Estonia Invites 30 Countries for Referendum *[Moscow Radio]* ... 78
- Estonia's Savisaar on Upcoming Referendum *[Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER 20 Feb]* ... 78

RSFSR

- Extraordinary RSFSR Congress To Convene 28 Mar *[TASS]* ... 78
- Silayev: Voronin Suggested He Must Resign *[Moscow Radio]* ... 79
- RSFSR Supreme Soviet 22 Feb Session *[TASS]* ... 81
- Silayev, Trade Union Chief Sign Agreement *[Moscow TV]* ... 81
- Uncovered KGB Equipment Not For Eavesdropping *[TASS]* ... 81
- Volgogrod Rally Appeals for Unity of USSR *[Moscow TV]* ... 82
- Yeltsin Meets Novgorod Dignitaries, Departs *[TASS]* ... 82
- Impact of Yeltsin RSFSR Presidency Pondered *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 22 Feb]* ... 83
- Over Half of Russians Want Gorbachev Resignation *[Radio Rossii]* ... 83
- Yeltsin Drop, CPSU Rise in Poll Assessed *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 19 Feb]* ... 83
- Telegrams to Legislature Support Yeltsin *[Moscow Radio]* ... 84
- Yeltsin on Scandal, Relations With Gorbachev *[IZVESTIYA 23 Feb]* ... 84
- Controversy Over Yeltsin Interview Continues ... 85
  - Khasbulatov Defends Remarks *[Budapest Radio]* ... 85
  - Sverdlovsk Officials Divided *[TASS]* ... 86
  - Commentary Criticizes Remarks *[Moscow Radio]* ... 86
- Moscow CPSU Gorkom 19 Feb Plenum Reported *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* ... 86
- Leningrad Referendum on City, Oblast Outlined *[Leningrad Maritime]* ... 87
- Leningrad Obkom Warns USSR 'in Danger' *[PRAVDA 18 Feb]* ... 87
- Party Officials Discuss Upcoming Referendum *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* ... 88
- Polozkov Receives Japanese Envoy *[TASS]* ... 88
- Communist Party Defends Lenin Museum *[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA 20 Feb]* ... 88
- Merging Tatar Party, Soviet Posts Banned *[IZVESTIYA 18 Feb]* ... 89
- Tatar SSR Mission Opens in Moscow *[TRUD 20 Feb]* ... 89
- Proceeds From Gold Sales Explained *[Moscow Radio]* ... 89
- TV Correspondent 'Beat Up' by Leningrad Militia *[Radio Rossii]* ... 90
- Additional Radio Frequencies Allotted to Leningrad *[Leningrad Radio]* ... 90

Western Republics

- Moldovan Deputies Reject USSR Referendum Law *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* ... 90
- Rukh Activists Occupy Lvov Building for 3d Day *[Moscow TV]* ... 90
- Gold Prospecting Reported in Ukraine *[Moscow TV]* ... 91

Caucasus

Armenian Supreme Soviet Makes Appointments *[Yerevan Radio]* 91
Armenian Diaspora Committee Elects New Chairman *[ARMENPRES]* 91
Armenia Denies Report on Nakhichevan Shooting *[Moscow Radio]* 91
Armenian Supreme Soviet Adopts Appeal to NKAO *[Yerevan International]* 92
Armenian Legislature Okays Privatization Bases *[Moscow Radio]* 92
Azerbaijan Legislature Ends First Work Week *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 20 Feb]* 92
Commission Discusses Azeri Refugee Affairs *[Baku Radio]* 93
Missile Strikes Military Unit in Stepanakert *[TASS]* 93
No Injuries Reported in Attempt on Bus in NKAO *[TASS]* 93
NKAO Deputy Balayan Sends Letter to Yeltsin *[Yerevan International]* 93
Measures To 'Normalize' Life in NKAO Detailed *[Baku Radio]* 94
Georgian Statement on Shavnabada 'Provocation' *[Tbilisi Radio]* 94
Militia Disarmed as 'Precautionary Measure' *[IZVESTIYA 21 Feb]* 95
More Armed Groups Disbanded; Weapons Seized *[Moscow Radio]* 95
Georgian Government Issues National Guard Law *[SELSKAYA ZHIZN 21 Feb]* 96
Georgia Anti-Army Rally 'Consequences' Feared *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 16 Feb]* 96
Voronin-Led Commission Arrives in South Ossetia *[Moscow TV]* 96
Report on Continued Violence in South Ossetia *[Tbilisi Radio]* 96
South Ossetian Soviet Asks for Republic Status *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 19 Feb]* 97
'Constructive Dialogue' Held on South Ossetia *[Moscow TV]* 97
Avalanches Cut Supply Line to South Ossetia *[Moscow TV]* 98
Tajik Supreme Soviet Adopts New Legislation *[Moscow Radio]* 98

Central Asia

Kazakh, Kirghiz Presidents Sign Cooperation Treaty *[PRAVDA 19 Feb]* 98
Writer Fears Kazakh 'Constitutional Monarchy' *[RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 13 Feb]* 99
New Kirghiz Oblast Elects First Secretary *[PRAVDA 20 Feb]* 99
Kirghiz Parties Advised To Buy Out Lenin Museum *[IZVESTIYA 19 Feb]* 99
Kirghiz President Cited on Union Treaty *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 Feb]* 100
Turkmen Premier Disputes Report on Oil Leasing *[IZVESTIYA 12 Feb]* 102
Uzbekistan Appeals for Ways To Halt Gulf War *[TASS]* 103
Uzbek Leader on Center-Republic Relationship *[IZVESTIYA 29 Jan]* 103

1 Apr Envisaged for Pact Military Dissolution

LD2502103391 Moscow TASS in English 1020 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovskiy]

Moscow February 25 TASS—All Warsaw Treaty military structures would cease to exist by April 1, according to deputy chief of staff of the pact's united armed forces Colonel General Vladimir Verevkin-Rakhalskiy.

The alliance's foreign and defence ministers, meeting in Budapest today, are likely to agree on this, Verevkin-Rakhalskiy told TASS.

The Warsaw Treaty's committee of defence ministers, the military council, the staff of the united armed forces and the technical committee would be abolished within slightly more than a month, the general said.

The Warsaw Treaty's military structure, created more than three decades ago by the will of member-countries will be scrapped, he said.

"There is no sense in preserving a union within which there is no voluntary striving to maintain allied relations," he stressed.

The military structures would have been scrapped anyway due to "objective processes and changes in the world", he said.

"The repudiation of the confrontational power policy in Europe has finally led to the logical end—the possibility to eliminate alliance structures," Verevkin-Rakhalskiy said.

The Warsaw Treaty could be replaced as a guarantor of peace and security, the general said.

The Charter of Paris envisages new structures and institutions for consultations at all levels of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, he said.

"They could regulate the entire complex of problems of security in Europe," he concluded.

Bessmertnykh, Yazov Attend Budapest Pact Talks

Arrive in Budapest 24 Feb

LD2402190391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1825 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest, 24 Feb (TASS)—A.A. Bessmertnykh, USSR foreign minister, and Marshal D.T. Yazov, USSR defense minister, arrived here today to take part in the extraordinary meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of Warsaw Pact member states at the foreign and defense minister level.

At Budapest Airport they were welcomed by F. Somogyi, secretary of state for the Hungarian Foreign Ministry; D. Meiszter, deputy secretary of state for the Hungarian Foreign Ministry; M. Beti, deputy secretary of state for the Hungarian Defense Ministry; Lieutenant General L. Borsits, chief of the Hungarian Army General Staff; and other officials.

Among the welcoming party was I.P. Aboimov, USSR ambassador to the Hungarian Republic.

Bessmertnykh Meets Counterparts

LD2502033691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2320 GMT 24 feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Zhirnikhin and Aleksandr Kuzmin]

[TExt] Budapest, 25 Feb (TASS)—A.A. Bessmertnykh, USSR foreign minister, began a series of bilateral meetings with his colleagues from East European countries immediately after his arrival here on Sunday evening to take part in the extraordinary conference of the Political Consultative Committee of Warsaw Pact member states.

During a conversation with G. Jeszenszky, Hungary's foreign minister, there was a conceptual exchange of opinions on the present and future of Europe and on the importance of Soviet-Hungarian relations from the point of view of the interests of the peoples of both countries. Their mutual deisre for genuine friendship and good-neighborliness was stressed. A new basic treaty, to the elaboration and conclusion of which in the very near future both countries are attaching heightened significance, should become the juridical base for relations between the USSR and the Hungarian Republic as they undergo transformation.

Both wider prospects for Soviet-Czechoslovak relations and some specific issues of cooperation, particularly in the economic field, were examined at the meeting between A.A. Bessmertynkh and J. Dienstbier, foreign minister of Czechoslovakia. The level of relations between the two countries will be determinated by the mutual desire of the two sides, the Soviet minister observed.

Meeting Opens 25 February

LD2502110591 Moscow TASS in English 1045 GMT legislature 25 Feb 91

[Text] Budapest February 25 TASS—A special meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee at the level of foreign and defence ministers opened here today. The meeting is attended by Soviet Foreign and Defence Ministers Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and Dmitriy Yazov.

Hungarian Official Cited on Security Guarantees

LD2202094191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0830 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] It is planned that a meeting of foreign and defense ministers of the six Warsaw Pact member countries will take place in Budapest on 25 February. Our correspondent Sergey (Oshevykin) reports from Budapest:

[(Oshevykin)] Very serious preparations for the ministerial meeting are being made in Budapest. All appearances are that Hungary's diplomacy and defense department do not seek an end to cooperation in certain traditional spheres, either with the Soviet Union or with the other current partners in the Warsaw Pact. Moreover, the foreign minister stated back at the beginning of this month that Hungary is prepared to give the Soviet Union security guarantees, for the sake of accelerating the process of self-dissolution of the Warsaw Pact organization.

I asked Janos Hermann, the Foreign Ministry press secretary, whether these proposals remain in force after being overtaken by the initiative put forward by the USSR president on an early final cessation of military activity by 1 April this year:

[Begin Hermann recording, in Hungarian, fading to Russian translation] Of course, our proposals remain in force, Janos Hermann says. We call them negative guarantees. Hungary is prepared to confirm that it seeks to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union and that it has no intentions directed against the USSR. Also, the Hungarian Republic will not permit its territory to be used by anyone to conduct hostile actions with respect to its eastern neighbor. We remain prepared today to guarantee all this. [end recording]

Pact Dissolution's Security Importance Viewed

PM2202170991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Feb 91 First Edition p 3

[Article by Major M. Zheglov under the rubric "The World Today: Problems and Judgments": "Warsaw Pact and European Security"]

[Text] By 1 April—some six weeks before the 36th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact—this organization's military structures will cease to exist. As already reported, the decision in this regard is to be adopted at the Political Consultative Committee session which will take place at the level of foreign and defense ministers in the next few days.

It is possible to have different views of this event, just as it is possible to make different assessments both of the Warsaw Pact itself and of its activity in the military and military-political spheres. The only thing that is clear is that we should not be in a hurry and run ahead of the locomotive, as the Romanian newspaper ADEVARUL did, for example. It voiced satisfaction that the Warsaw Pact is leaving the stage, having played "the role of gendarme in the socialist camp, drowning in blood any attempt to dispute the communist system." However, many people subscribe to other views which, in my opinion, are far closer to the truth.

This is because the Warsaw Pact did not come into being on someone's whim but was created under specific historical conditions, as a result of specific historical circumstances. It is to its considerable credit that Europe has now been living without war for 46 years, whatever it might be fashionable to say there now. For several decades the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces fulfilled the role of one of the elements of the military-strategic balance—which largely determined security and stability on the planet. And we hardly have the right to forget about the Warsaw Pact's modern, constructive ideas aimed at detente, arms reduction, and the development of the all-European process.

The Warsaw Pact military organization was created in accordance with the will of its member countries, and it will be disbanded in accordance with their will. What attitude should we take to this fact? It is not just a ritual act that lies behind this event. The Joint Armed Forces and their control structures are ceasing to exist, the Soviet troop withdrawal from Hungary and Czechoslovakia is being completed, and our Western Group of Forces is being reduced. The question of the departure of Soviet troops from Poland is on the agenda. All this gives rise to the question: What will happen to our security?

In my view, there is no need to dramatize the situation. In any case, we would sooner or later have taken this step. Because it is dictated, above all, by the changes which are occurring in the world. The abandonment of the policy of military strong-arm confrontation and of acute ideological struggle has also dictated the need to eliminate bloc structures. This is on the one hand. On the other, the political forces which have acceded to power in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania reckon that there is no further need to preserve allied relations within the framework of the Warsaw Pact. Under these conditions it makes no sense to preserve a military alliance in which there is no voluntary desire to maintain allied relations. The artificial containment of this process, let alone any radical measures would not only exacerbate relations among the Warsaw Pact states but also result in regression to the times of confrontation and cold war.

The Warsaw Pact's military structures are ceasing to exist. But this event, albeit not a very pleasant one for us, can and must give a boost to the start of a process of eliminating the split in the continent and the creation of a system of all-European security. It will be hard for supporters of the preservation and strengthening of the North Atlantic bloc to try to find arguments justifying the need for NATO's military organization to exist, still less to be strengthened.

What now? The North Atlantic bloc will hardly extend its sphere of influence and accept our Warsaw Pact partners into its ranks, at any rate not in the immediate future. If only because to do so NATO would have to entirely change its structure and allocate vast sums to rearming the armies of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Would the North Atlantic bloc want to have in its ranks countries which are not noted for internal stability and which have strained relations with each other?

The entry of the Warsaw Pact states' armies into NATO's military structure could not fail to upset the balance of forces in Europe and the world. Not that anyone wants this today—not even those in whose favor it might change. This is understood in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest. This was why, despite the fears that existed, the question of creating a "triple pact" which, so it was believed, might be the first stage in these countries' entry into NATO was not raised at the summit meeting of three neighboring East European countries—Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary.

The fact that our Warsaw Pact allies do not intend to break off relations with us entirely is also borne out by statements by their official spokesmen. Thus, Lieutenant General A. Antall, secretary of state at the Hungarian Ministry of Defense, recently emphasized the need to conclude a new agreement on military cooperation with the USSR, which would provide mutual guarantees of confidence and security. It may be assumed that others of our neighbors will do likewise.

So, does the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact military structures not spell any problems for our security? That is not so. There are problems, and they are considerable. Above all, the tasks of ensuring the country's defense capability, which are now shouldered entirely by our Armed Forces, are increasing. We cannot ignore the fact that, despite the weakening of confrontational trends within NATO and the appreciable enhancement of political aspects in that organization's activity, it remains a military bloc. What is more, forces which advocate recreating the Cold War structures have once again become active within it. A crisis only had to break out in the Persian Gulf region, for example, for NATO to begin putting the brakes on the programs to reduce armed forces and armaments and appealing for the creation of new mobile forces capable of operating in any region. The desire of certain NATO circles to endow the bloc with the functions of the main guarantor of European security must also be seen.

At the same time NATO has begun to make the policy of expanding cooperation with our country directly dependent on the development of the political situation in the Baltic region, which, incidentally, can in no way come into the North Atlantic bloc's zone of responsibility. Arguments have even appeared concerning the possibility of NATO's coming up to the Soviet Union's western border.

We must take all these aspects into consideration and draw the correct conclusions for ensuring the country's security. There is no need to emphasize that this can be resolved to the maximum degree on the scale of creating an all-European security system.

More and more new concepts are emerging on this plane. For example, the idea of transforming the North Atlantic alliance and the Warsaw Pact from military-political blocs into a unified all-European alliance functioning under the auspices of all-European political institutions and the United Nations has become widespread. To be honest, for all its euphony, this idea suggests associations with Campanella's "City of the Sun"—it is unrealistically bright and remote, although recent years have proved that nothing in international politics is impossible.

We pin more hopes on the current CSCE process. The Paris Charter for the new Europe recorded its new structures and institutions—consultations at all levels, a foreign ministers' council, a senior officials' committee, meetings of ministers and other representatives of the CSCE participant countries, the CSCE legislative assembly, and much besides. It is not hard to see that these structures and, if necessary, others too, given active and effective work, are also capable of regulating the entire package of security problems. Security in Europe above all and, thus, for the Soviet Union too.

United States & Canada

U.S. Response to Soviet Gulf Peace Plan Viewed

'Irritation' With Plan 'Obvious'

LD2402185391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Vladimir Zvyagin commentary]

[Text] At 1030 yesterday, Saturday, when the Security Council gathered in the UN headquarters in New York behind closed doors to discuss the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the situation around Kuwait, it did not occur to many people that the coalition's ground forces in Saudi Arabia had already received the order to prepare for a mass offensive. In fact, the Council's evening session was also disrupted yesterday when a number of participants expressed indignation, wherenever possible in diplomatic terms, with regard to the disrespect shown by the U.S. leadership for this supreme body of the international community of nations. Yesterday's events confirmed, obviously and dramatically, worries that have been of serious concern for UN delegates for many days. Having adopted Resolution 678 on using force for the liberation of Kuwait, which was occupied by Iraq, the Security Council in fact gave a mandate to the allied coalition, first and foremost to the United States, to use military might practically at their own discretion.

Wide-scale preparations in these circumstances for an offensive by the U.S. military contingent of over half a million in the Persian Gulf have run across real steps by our diplomats who proposed a peaceful plan for a way out of the crisis. This plan was met in Washington with obvious irritation. Now and then there were statements by various pentagon officials and all kinds of experts saying that, if not for the Moscow proposals, the coalition forces would have entered Kuwait a long time ago. Here they think that the so-called Bush ultimatum put an end to many hopes for a peaceful settlement of the conflict by setting on Friday absolutely unreal parameters to the schedule of the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from the occupied territories. President Bush himself dotted the final i for the United Nations yesterday during the morning sitting of the UN Security Council. He made public his statement from the White House on the determination of the United States, the head of the anti-Iraq coalition, to complete the liberation of Kuwait by military means.

Differences Considered 'Natural'

LD2302170791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1511 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Commentary by announcer Tomas Kolesnichenko; from the "International Panorama" program]

[Text] You must now be convinced that the scenario is that Washington sees it as its task not only to compel Iraq to get out of Kuwait but also to punish it and, of course, to eliminate Saddam Husayn from the political arena. Prior to the talks in Moscow, when Baghdad was ignoring the Security Council resolutions, one could justify this course of events. Such is the logic of war and, as they say, if the enemy does not surrender, it is annihilated. But now, under the new conditions, Bush will find it very difficult to justify such actions. After all, if Iraq complies with the conditions of the Security Council resolutions—and it did announce it would comply with them—it will mean that the U.S. mission has run its course. And one more circumstance: Bush is, for the time being, relying on the powerful support of public opinion. It is a kind of explosion of ultrapatriotism.

All this hysteria is also explained by the fact that, over a period of more than a month of war, the Americans have so far lost 17 people killed, and 32 others have vanished without a trace, in other words less victims than several days of street accidents in New York would have claimed. The ground war in the desert, even if it is a blitzkrieg, as Washington is hoping, will claim thousands and, perhaps tens of thousands of American lives. And, let us be blunt, such things are not forgiven in America, so everything is still ahead of us. And, one more circumstance, pertaining to the Soviet-U.S. relations. We now see we have divergences, differences in interpretation, different points of view on the resolution of the crisis in the Persian Gulf. But, it seems to me that this is natural, because each superpower—and, in this case, our role is that of a great power which has interests of its own in the region—can have and should have differences concerning its own interests. It is not at all obligatory to turn these differences into a confrontation or a return to the cold war. Hence, this is how I would put it. One thing is clear: for the first time since the beginning of the war, Moscow began to speak in a voice of its own, and Washington has heard us.

U.S. 'Profound Skepticism' Viewed

LD2202175491 Moscow TASS in English 1640 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS political analyst Askold Biryukov]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The Gulf situation is rapidly changing. No sooner had world public opinion expressed its disappointment with President Saddam Husayn's Thursday radio statement, when it learned about the Iraqi leadership's readiness to accept President Gorbachev's peace plan offered to Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz.

The repercussions are most diverse. They range from profound scepticism, promptly voiced by Washington, for instance, to satisfaction and hope, expressed by representatives of many United Nations members.

An anonymous spokesman of the U.S. Adminstration even hastened to declare that the "Soviet-Iraqi proposal" to end the Gulf war "is unacceptable for the United

States", because Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait is allegedly "not unconditional". Washington is holding consultations with its allies and it remains to be hoped the statement by this anonymous spokesman will not be its final say.

According to a correspondent of the Chinese newspaper RENMIN RIBAO in Washington, the United States' "cool reaction" to the Soviet peace plan confirms the view, now current in diplomatic and journalistic quarters, that the U.S. pursues strategic goals in the Gulf area. "The United States," he says, "intends to deal a shattering blow at Iraq in the military and political spheres, and to do away with the Husayn menace. The Soviet terms do not suit it, because it fears the Soviet Union may benefit from them."

What sort of "benefit" is in question? Who will stand to gain if the war conflagration is stopped at the very threshold of the Soviet Union? If an end is put to the sufferings of the Kuwait and Iraqi peoples? If no more blood is spilt in the sands of the Arabian desert and the lives of scores or even hundreds of thousand of young Americans and Britons, Frenchmen and Arabs are saved? The Soviet Union alone?

I agree with the prominent American public leader Jesse Jackson, who regards the report from Moscow as a "spark of hope that thousands of lives will be saved". Will this not be to the advantage of countries and peoples that have sent their sons to fight the Gulf war?

Jackson said the United States, which bears the brunt of the Gulf hostilities, should also bear equal responsibility as the allies' diplomatic leader. "If the Soviet Union has achieved success "at the given stage of talks with Saddam Husayn, the United States is by duty bound to complete this process," he stressed. Jackson added that the time has come for intensive contacts in order to discuss Moscow's plan to settle the crisis.

Some people are now trying to obstruct the Moscow agreements by references to the fact that they do not envisage any preparations or Iraq's economic boycott. But who will pay compensation to families of peaceful Iraqi civilians killed by allied bombs and missiles? After all, they are not responsible for the Gulf war. And must economic sanctions be directed against the Iraqi people, who have not yet recovered from the 8-year-long Iraqi-Iranian war?

Be what it may, the news from Moscow has paved the way to serious discussions and responsible decisions. Will it be possible to reach positive results and settle the Gulf conflict by peaceful means before the all-devouring flames of war spread all over the region? This is what the international community should worry about today.

'Patience' Needed for Improving Ties With U.S.

LD2302144791 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Yuriy Solton commentary]

[Text] The postponement of a Soviet-U.S. summit, scheduled for February, disputes in the field of disarmament Washington's negative approach to the events in the Baltic region. All this has given rise to opinions that Soviet-American relations have cooled off, and that they will possibly move backwards, as they did in the seventies. So will there be any changes in the recently proclaimed course to a partnership between the two countries? Yuriy Solton provides this answer:

Indeed, the first stage of Soviet-U.S. partnership has proved to be not simple. Let's take the Gulf war as an example. For the first time in the entire post-war period, Moscow and Washington acted as allies in that regional conflict. The community of their goals is obvious, but the two countries differ as far as the understanding of the limits of the United Nations mandate is concerned. An opportunity has appeared today to discuss all the most ticklish problems frankly, and say the most unpleasnat things without going into hysterics, but listening patiently to the arguments of each other.

It should be understood that the mere declaration of the end of the cold war period ensures in no way an immediate transfer to a new order based on full trust. There should be a transitional period. There are still too many people both in the Soviet Union and in the United States who adhere to the old thinking of the cold war times. It's not easy to overcome this thinking. Time and patience are required. And the main thing is not to draw any rash conclusions.

Of course, when Washington declares that the date supplied by the Soviet Union in keeping with the agreement on reduction of conventional forces in Europe, signed by 22 countries last November, is not trustworthy, this can't but help arouse a feeling of bewilderment. It wasn't a nice gesture on Washington's part to decide to give humanitarian aid to the Baltic republics, bypassing the center. But all these facts are the hazards of the process.

As the Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh has put it, nothing should be ruled out. There's no guaranteed march of events. But we, the minister said further, have already reached such a level of relations with the United States and the West as a whole which will ensure their qualitative changes, and will help make the 21st century a century of an entirely different international cooperation.

Economist Criticizes Defense Budget Comparison

PM1902141991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[Article by Economist Yu. Shchipunov: "These Perfidious Figures: In the Mirror of Statistics"]

[Text] Moscow—"Lies, damned lies, and statistics," Mark Twain once said. He wasn't that wrong either. Outwardly impassive figures are perfidious in the hands of incompetents.

Here are a few examples. One being the well-known string of figures relating to bread prices in our country and the United States and their correlation with wages. A price of $2.48 "there" is compared with our 50 kopeks per kilogram. The logical conclusion is drawn, as it were, that bread is cheaper in the States since you can buy 685kg of bread with wages of $1,700 per month, whereas in our country you can only buy 540kg with 270 rubles [R]. There does not seem to be a thing to say against it.

But... we're talking about wages in the hand and not the full, real value of the goods.

One can talk about unjust pay principles and about net wages that disappear like water into sand. But that is another matter. The fact is still that bread is now cheaper in our country. There's no getting away from it.

It is the same picture with defense spending. Here many people also love to juggle and manipulate figures. While visiting America, Academician Yu. Ryzhov said that our spending on the military-industrial complex is estimated at $200 billion. Right away a lover of statistics in a respectable newspaper casts aside the word "dollars," sets the 200 billion figure against our 500-billion budget (for some reason he trusts that figure, incidentally), but now in rubles, and gets a simply fantastic result!

Evidently the analyst thought the official published figures for defense spending in 1990—R70.9 billion—somewhat feeble. What do you know, 14.5 percent of all budget spending! Is that too low? What if we make a realistic assessment of the announced sum? In terms of the ratio between full, real wages in our country and the United States, R70 billion is commensurate with... $300 billion in America! That is virtually equivalent to the latter's current defense spending. So much for your "too low."

But figures are surprising, all the same. If you treat them carefully and professionally, they reveal much that is of interest. They become dangerous if they fall into the hands of forgers. And if someone tries arbitrarily to convert dollars into rubles and back and to compare the incomparable, the reverberations can be heard from the backyard bench to the walls of the legislature.

China

Commentary Views Possible MiG-29 Sale to PRC

OW2302035491 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 1300 GMT 22 Feb 91

[(Korzelov) commentary; from the "Half an Hour With Wang Xiao" program]

[Text] Recently, reports have appeared in publications in the Soviet Union and abroad that the Soviet Union is going provide a number of MiG-29 advanced fighters to China. Is the story reliable? We asked our station's commentator on military affairs (Korzelov) this question.

He wrote: I cannot confirm or deny this story, as I was told by a certain bureau under the Soviet Ministry of Defense. Our country, like most countries in the world, does not publish agreements involving this area of international relations. Not long ago, a Soviet delegation headed by Igor Belousov, deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, visited China and held talks on cooperation in the field of the defense industry. In view of this, it is entirely possible that the Soviet Union would provide arms to China. The MiG-29's, said a Ministry of Defense official, belong to the export category of Soviet arms. The supersonic, all-weather fighter-intercepter is the latest product of the Mikoyan Designing Bureau. Two new Soviet MiG planes made their debut at the air show in Farnborough City, Britain, two years ago. They not only surprised people present at the air show but caused a sensation in the world market of modern fighter planes. Many index numbers of the MiG-29 are higher than those of similar planes of the Western nations. Experts especially pointed out: Its engine is very powerful, enabling the fighter to reach a height of 1,000 meters just 15 seconds after take-off. It is very important for modern fighters to have this kind of ability. German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg believes that this is the most advanced fighter plane in Europe. The defense minister's admiration is well-founded. Pilots of the Federal troops took over scores of fighters of this type from the military of Democratic Germany. The ever earnest Germans carefully examined its performance and concluded that its reputation is well-deserved. A prestigious journal in military circles carried a report on an air war game in Germany involving U.S. F-16's and Soviet MiG-29's. The MiGs won several times. After the exercise, a defeated U.S. pilot said: First, the MiGs' vertical speed is much higher; second, radar on the Migs is able to detect the enemy planes earlier.

It is only fair and reasonable that the superior MiGs designed by the Mikoyan Designing Bureau are enjoying a lofty reputation around the world. Immediately after the Farnborough Air Show, India, Bulgaria, Cuba, and Syria signed contracts for MiG purchases. Of late, companies [as heard] in Britain, Israel, South Korea, and Canada have also shown an interest in buying this plane.

(Korzelov) wrote in conclusion: I would not be surprised if the Chinese military decided to buy the MiGs. They are indeed high-performance air defense aircrafts. In view of the current level of military training in the Soviet Union and China, there are broad prospects for military cooperation between the two countries.

Northeast Asia

Planning for Gorbachev Visit to Japan Under Way

OW2502131591 Moscow in Japanese to Japan 1000 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Report by unidentified PRAVDA Tokyo correspondent on President Gorbachev's planned visit to Japan in April—read by announcer]

[Text] Listeners! President Gorbachev's planned visit to Japan in mid-April is viewed by Japanese public opinion as this year's biggest event. In connection with this, a PRAVDA Tokyo correspondent reports as follows:

In the lobby of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, which is now working on an itinerary for President Gorbachev's four-day visit to Japan, representatives of various social organizations and local governments are vying to invite President Gorbachev to their organizations and governments. This has been reported by YOMIURI SHIMBUN, an influential daily in Japan.

According to the report, fierce competition to invite the president is under way between Hokkaido Prefecture, which is near the Soviet Union, and Niigata Prefecture, which has played an important role in promoting working exchanges between Japan and the Soviet Union for many years. For example, the Hokkaido prefectural governor, in his letter to President Gorbachev, stressed that all residents in the prefecture ardently hope for President Gorbachev's visit to their prefecture.

On the other, the Niigata prefectural governor already organized a special committee several months ago to welcome President Gorbachev and the prefectural residents believe they are qualified to invite the president to their prefecture, because it has made a great deal of effort for the Soviet Far East Siberia Exhibition, to be held on the occasion of the president's planned visit to Japan. The Hiroshima mayor hopes for President Gorbachev's visit to his city and stressed the importance of his visit, citing as the reason that the president, in his 1986 Vladivostok statement, proposed holding a Helsinki-type international conference in Hiroshima City. In addition, Nagasaki, Matsuyama, and Shimoda cities, where Russian graves are located, believe that, if the president comes to their cities to see the well-tended graves, this would further deepen understanding between Japan and the Soviet Union. The representative of enterprises in Osaka City, citizens of Kyoto City and Nagano Prefecture also hope for a visit from President Gorbachev.

According to YOMIURI SHIMBUN, a top Foreign Ministry official in charge of working out the president's itinerary appears to be racking his brains about how to adjust all these requests, because he must give priority to such official schedules as the president's talks with Prime Minister Kaifu, his meeting with prominent Japanese politicians, his visit to the Diet to deliver an address, and a press conference. The official finds that it is very difficult to find any leeway to allow the president to visit local areas, because of his tight schedule. Japanese newspapers have reported that some people hope to extend his visit by a day. But the Soviet side is not believed to have responded to this hope, since President Gorbachev is too busy. This has been a report by a PRAVDA correspondent in connection with President Gorbachev's planned visit to Japan.

'Team Spirit' Disrupted DPRK-ROK Talks

PM2202140991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent S. Tikhomirov: "DPRK: Ricochet"]

[Text] Pyongyang—Pyongyang has unilaterally broken off its dialogue with South Korea at the level of heads of government. The decision to "withdraw from the game" was made in protest at the upcoming Team Spirit-91 maneuvers. The DPRK held South Korea and the United States responsible for wrecking the inter-Korean dialogue.

The annual U.S.-South Korean maneuvers formally started at the end of January, and right up until recently the North was urging the South to abandon the exercises. But Seoul remained deaf to those appeals. The scenario for the present war games is virtually indistinguishable from previous ones. However, their duration has been reduced, as well as the number of participants. The South emphatically underlines these circumstances and portrays them as a concession to Pyongyang.

Despite everything, however, the show of military might by the Southerners in conjunction with the Americans fits in badly with the North-South dialogue which has just begun. Team Spirit is a blatant anomaly today.

I grant that the Southerners are suffering from the syndrome of 1950—the year the Korean war began. But in my opinion, it is shortsighted to ignore the fact that the situation in the region is changing for the better with the establishment of diplomatic relations between Moscow and Seoul and the development of Sino-South Korean contacts. South Korean officials' claims that U.S. troops must remain in the South of the peninsula are also dubious in this connection. A comparative analysis published in both the U.S. and the South Korean press attests that the ROK Armed Forces are capable of countering any "aggression" from the North without any external assistance.

Another two circumstances are especially alarming today. With the commencement of combat operations in the Persian Gulf, the South Korean Armed Forces and the Pentagon's 43,000-strong corps stationed south of the 38th Parallel have been placed in a state of full combat readiness, once again in case of an attack from the North. The second, no less important fear: The defensive Team Spirit poses a direct threat to the process, now under way, of the normalization of relations between the two Koreas. The holding of maneuvers has already ricocheted against the fourth round of talks between the prime ministers of the DPRK and South Korea, scheduled for the end of February. It will not take place.

It turns out that the offensive peace policy in relations with Pyongyang, which official Seoul proclaimed at the beginning of the new year, in fact runs the risk of turning into an all-out defense.

DPRK's Suspension of Talks With ROK Viewed

SK2402111591 Moscow International Service in Korean 1100 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From the "Focus on Asia" program]

[Text] As already reported, the DPRK has declared that it will unilaterally suspend the premier-level talks with the ROK.

Station reporter Konstantin Belov reports from Pyongyang that last Sunday [17 February] all popular broadcasting media in the DPRK reported on the statement issued by North Korea. This statement, which used stern phrases, expressed dissatisfaction over Seoul's refusal to cancel the 1991 Team Spirit U.S.-South Korean joint military exercise and over the South Korean Army's state of combat readiness since the start of the Persian Gulf war. According to Pyongyang, this kind of behavior is only leading toward an acute confrontation. Before the start of the North-South dialogue, relations between both sides were as such. In this present atmosphere, it seems that the fourth round of talks slated for 25 February will not be carried out.

Let us recollect at this point that the signing of the [word indistinct] joint documents was the result of the three previous rounds of talks. Pyongyang had proposed a North-South Korean nonaggression declaration and Seoul a joint statement by both sides on reconciliation and cooperation. There was no notable differences in the two proposals when viewing their contents. The two sides' delegates even admitted this. Therefore, we had expected both sides to agree on a full text of a document. However that was not the case.

Pyongyang could see that Seoul's position is to try to reunify Korea by swallowing up the DPRK, which is in accordance with Germany's method of unification. As a result, the talks have been driven into a corner.

There is an impression that the North and South Korean sides have not provided new positions for the February dialogue. We can say this, because since early this year North Korea was once again strongly propagandizing the plan to hold a pannational rally of reunification while emphasizing the participation of South Korean dissidents. By doing so, North Korea [word indistinct] that it would not have relations with the Seoul government. On the other hand, Seoul did not reject the Team Spirit military exercise. Therefore, talks which were started with much effort were suspended. What is Moscow's opinion on this?

[Begin recording in Russian with superimposed translation into Korean] Some time ago, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that the Soviet Union considers North-South dialogue to be the starting point of the practical means of improving the Korean peninsula situation. This will establish trust and mutual understanding between the North and South, thus contributing to resolving the Korean issue this year. Therefore, we believe that acts that complicate Pyongyang-Seoul relations, hinder North-South contacts, and create additional barriers on the road of dialogue must be restrained.

The Team Spirit military exercise is one of the barriers. For a long time the Soviet Union had appealed to the United States and South Korea to reexamine their attitude on this military exercise.

We believe that ultimately if dialogue is held because of sound thinking and in all levels between the Korean sides, this will result in the rapid resumption of the talks.

Finally, Vitaliy Churkin, spokesman of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, said that this will be in the interests of the Korean people and for strengthening peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and the neighboring Asia and Pacific regions. [end recording]

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Commentary Views 1986 Manila Uprising, Results

HK2502122591 Moscow in Tagalog to the Philippines 1300 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Aleksander Kuznetsov commentary]

[Text] Viewed in today's light, events in February 1986 in the Philippines came to a speedy head. The Marcos dictatorship was toppled by democratic forces which had, for several decades, experienced repression under that regime. As a result of the People Power revolt, Marcos and his associates, who had held power in Malacanang for almost two decades, had to flee the country by means of a helicopter provided by the United States. After it was announced that the Marcoses had left Malacanang, a new government was formed under President Corazon Aquino's leadership.

During the past five years, Filipinos have seen that restoring democracy has been a difficult exercise. One example of this is reflected in the national economy, which has not flourished and which requires radical strategies.

The issue of agrarian reform, which was on top of the Aquino government's program, has faced strong opposition from large land-owning groups. Foreign companies have also displayed a lack of enthusiasm for the Philippine economy's success, and instead have shown more interest in exploiting the country's natural resources for their own purposes.

As of now, the subsistence level of the majority of Filipinos remains low—most Filipinos earn $3 daily.

The number of unemployed is large, and the labor front has experienced strikes and protests. Analysts say Manila's foreign debt has reached $28 billion.

Estimates reveal that the funds taken out of the country by the Marcoses amounts to as much as $10 billion. If Aquino's government can retrieve this, it would be a great boost to the economy. But to date, the government has recovered only a small amount of the total.

The Aquino government has also had to put up with threats from some elements of the Armed Forces, which have mounted various coups d'etat attempts. During the administration's five-year reign, several coups were launched and thwarted.

The problem presented by the American military bases is another factor in the Philippine situation. Results of the latest talks between Manila and Washington on the bases—particularly Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base—indicate that the bases will be retained. However, feelings in the Aquino administration against the retention of the the bases continue to increase. The talks between both sides continue.

Washington would like to have the military bases' stay extended, and it is exerting economic pressure on Manila towards this end. There is a large possibility that the facilities will remain for seven more years, in line with the Pentagon's wishes.

One thing for sure is that the military bases will eventually be dismantled. Even as Manila accedes to Washington's wish, the Philippines remains determined to make the Southeast Asian region a free and nonaligned zone.

Commentary Views Philippine-U.S. Bases Talks

HK2302052891 Moscow in Tagalog to the Philippines 1300 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Aleksey Kondratyev commentary]

[Text] Observers say that the six series of talks by both sides signify that Manila and Washington are in serious discussion. But some observers believe that if Manila can be assured that Washington will pay the amount it is demanding, the issue on the bases' future will then be resolved. But events are not that simple. Despite the fact that both sides have been discussing the compensation issue, there are other issues which can not be measured in financial terms, such as Philippine security, political stability and full implementation of its Constitution. These issues have often been emphasized by groups opposed to the presence of the U.S. military bases. They believe that the continued presence of the military bases manifests itself in the United States controlling the Philippines. Existing Philippine laws are not being enforced against U.S. soldiers, which proves that the Philippines has no sovereignty. The opposition groups also believe that the military bases degrade the Philippines' standing in international affairs. They also stressed the role of the facilities in the U.S. agression against Korea, Vietnam, and Indochina.

On the other hand, the country's political groups insist that the Constitution's nuclear-free provision should be complied with. The provision states that any entry and storage of nuclear weapons in any part of the country is completely prohibited. This provision is undoubtedly being violated.

Meanwhile, it is worthwhile to observe the Senate's concern on this issue. Based on reports, a big group of senators has expressed its opposition to a new agreement. According to the report, of the 23 senators, 16 have fully expressed their opposition to the retention of the military facilities. The present agreement will expire in September of this year.

The economic issue seems to be Manila's major consideration in deciding whether or not to allow the U.S. bases to remain. According to Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus, a new treaty is set for signing, but to date Washington has not stated the amount it would pay for the retention of its facilities. Manila should consider that the beneficial or detrimental effects of the bases cannot be measured by the dollars it could get.

Near East & South Asia

Government Statement Issued on Ground War

LD2402120291 Moscow TASS in English 1101 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Mikhail Ivanov and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow February 24 TASS—The Soviet Government expressed regret over the missing of a real chance to achieve a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

In a statement over the start of a ground offensive in the Gulf, it said "the instinct to rely on a military solution" prevailed, despite Iraq's declared readiness to pull all its forces out of Kuwait unconditionally.

The government statement was read out at a news briefing here by Foreign Ministry Spokesman Vitaliy Churkin.

"The Soviet Union expresses regret that a most realistic chance to secure a peaceful outcome of the conflict and achieve the goals set by United Nations Security Council resolutions without further casualties and destruction has been passed up," it said.

"The differences between the formulas accepted by Iraq and proposals by a number of other countries were not too wide and lended themselves to resolution within the U.N. Security Council framework within a day or two," it continued.

"It is still not too late to do this. The Security Council, which is now in session, should get down to examining the situation that has taken shape without delay," the statement said.

The full text of the Soviet Government statement follows:

"United States President George Bush announced at dawn on February 24 that he had ordered the start of ground operations against Iraq.

"The instinct to rely on a military solution prevailed, despite the fact that Iraq's agreement to withdraw its forces from Kuwait in keeping with United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 660 had created a basically new situation, clearing the way to transferring the Gulf conflict to the footing of a political settlement.

"As is known, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz told a news conference in Moscow on February 23 that the Iraqi leadership was prepared to pull all its forces out of Kuwait immediately and unconditionally to positions they occupied on August 1, 1990.

"The Soviet Union, which had done much to impel Iraq to take that step, urged the international community to take advantage of the opportunity in order to prevent the conflict from escalating into a still sharper and bloodier phase.

"The Soviet president during February 23 had telephone conversations with the leaders of the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Japan, Syria, Egypt, and Iran.

"Before that, the Soviet president had sent personal messages to the heads of state and government of all countries that are Security Council members, as well as to the U.N. secretary-general, briefing them on the results of the latest round of talks with Tariq 'Aziz in Moscow, which produced qualitative shifts in Iraq's position.

"The governments of Arab countries were advised of steps being undertaken by us. The Soviet ambassador to the United Nations took steps towards convening an emergency Security Council meeting to examine the obtaining situation as a top priority, set the date for the start of the Iraqi troop withdrawal from Kuwait, and resolve the issue of confirming, verifying and monitoring the cease-fire and troop withdrawal.

"The Soviet Union expresses regret that a most realistic chance to secure a peaceful outcome of the conflict and achieve the goals set by United Nations Security Council resolutions without further casualties and destruction has been passed up.

"The differences between the formulas accepted by Iraq and proposals by a number of other countries were not too wide and lent themselves to resolution within the U.N. Security Council framework within a day or two.

"It is still not too late to do this. The Security Council, which is now in session, should get down to examining the situation that has taken shape without delay."

Ignatenko Briefs Press 22 Feb on Gulf Plan

Outlines 'Tightened Up' Document

LD2202200191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1933 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Andrey Orlov and Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—The document worked out today during the Soviet-Iraqi talks has been "substantially tightened up in the direction of Iraq's responsibility" by comparison with yesterday's according to a statement made at a briefing by Vitaliy Ignatenko, chief of the press service of the USSR President.

He declared that the document contains the following conditions:

1. Iraq agrees to fulfill Resolution 660 of the UN Security Council, that is, immediately and unconditionally to withdraw its troops from Kuwait to the positions they occupied on 1 August 1990;

2. The withdrawal of troops will begin on the day after the ceasefire in all the hostilties on land, sea and in the air has taken place.

3. The withdrawal of troops will be completed in 21 days, including the withdrawal of troops from the City of Kuwait during the first four days.

4. As soon as the troops have been withdrawn from Kuwait the reasons for adopting other resolutions by the UN Security Council would be exhausted and, hence the above-mentioned resolutions will cease to exist.

5. All prisoners of war will be released and repatriated within three days after the ceasefire and cessation of military actions;

6. The confirmation of monitoring and supervision of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops will be implemented by observers or peace-keeping forces, to be determined by the United Nations Security Council.

Iraqi Response Expected 'Any Hour'

LD2202202491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1955 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Andrey Orlov and Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—The document worked out during today's Soviet-Iraqi talks here, which defines ways of resolving the Kuwaiti crisis, has already been sent to Baghdad, and the Soviet leadership expects an answer at "any hour." This was disclosed at a briefing here by Vitaliy Ignatenko, the head of the USSR president's press service. Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, the USSR foreign minister; Yevgeniy Primakov, the special representative of the USSR president; and Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, took part in the work on the document, he said.

Giving more details, Vitaliy Ignatenko said that the document had been sent to Baghdad "by Soviet communications channels," and Saddam Husayn had received it "at about 1800 hours Moscow time." The Iraqi leadership, he said, "has a clear understanding that every minute counts," added the chief of the USSR president's press service. He added that Tariq 'Aziz "will remain in Moscow until tomorrow and will probably meet with journalists accredited here."

Answering questions Vitaliy Ignatenko emphasized that, although the U.S. position in respect of Iraq's withdrawal of its forces from Kuwait "was more harsh than that envisioned in the Soviet plan," the latter constitutes the "maximum that could be achieved in the existing situation."

On Gorbachev-Bush Phone Call

LD2202203891 Moscow TASS in English
2018 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Veronkia Romanenkova and Andrey Orlov]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—A revised blueprint of a document about a peaceful settlement of the Gulf conflict "was met with attention by George Bush. The U.S. President thanked Mikhail Gorbachev for his contribution to the settlement of the conflict," the Soviet president's spokesman Vitaliy Ignatenko said at a briefing today.

During the 90-minute telephone conversation the Soviet and American presidents "analysed in a profound way the current situation in the Gulf zone and discussed tactical and strategic tasks for today, which are sure to remain for tomorrow," Ignatenko said.

Responding to the question of a U.S. journalist about Iraq's responsibility for the consequences of the Kuwaiti crisis, Ignatenko said that "the Soviet Union continues to regard Iraq as an aggressor with all consequences stemming from it".

Praises 'Partnership' With U.S.

LD2302114491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0939 GMT 23 Feb 91

["Special news bulletin"]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Yesterday, 22 February, late in the evening, a briefing was given by Ignatenko, aide to the USSR president and head of the president's press service, on the results of the talks with Tariq 'Aziz, Iraqi foreign minister.

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Unidentified correspondent in English with superimposed Russian translation] Would it be possible for you to tell us what degree of cooperation, actual cooperation, there is between Moscow and Washington? Are the Soviet Union and the United States coordinating their responses, their approach to Iraq? Or is it a question of the Soviet Union making suggestions, and then the United States finding out about them afterwards?

[Ignatenko] No, I would say that—I would like to confirm once again, that without the relations of real partnership that have grown up between the United States and the USSR in recent years, it would have been difficult to build bridges. It would have been difficult in general to implement the strivings for a new and more just world order. I think that this understanding lies at the basis of the strategic course of our country. I think that it meets with understanding from the United States, from the administration, and personally from President Bush.

We have all seen that from the beginning of the crisis in the Persian Gulf—and it is particularly important to note this—the USSR and the United States have invariably acted taking each other's interests into account and—what is very important—also without any suspicion. [passage omitted] [end recording]

TASS Details Gorbachev-Bush 22 Feb Phone Call

LD2202220291 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 2136 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 23 Feb (TASS)—The presidents of the USSR and the United States spent 90 minutes on the telephone this evening, discussing problems connected with the war in the Persian Gulf. The results of the work done during the day to flesh out the proposals under discussion at the meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Tariq 'Aziz were discussed in detail.

In expectation of the final reply from Baghdad, the two men discussed, in all their aspects, the best possible options for arriving at a political solution, which, while ensuring fulfillment of the demands of the UN Security Council, would make it possible to avoid further deaths and still more grave and, perhaps, tragic results arising from the continuation of hostilities. Mikhail Gorbachev listened attentively to the arguments put forward by the U.S. President. The United States is bearing the main military burden.

The conversation was wide-ranging. Its refrain was the understanding of the key role of USSR-U.S. cooperation at such a crucial time. A chance has opened up for achieving the aim set by the United Nations as a result of the development of the conflict in its military stage. And it is considered necessary to use this chance to the full on the grounds that the highest priority is human life and their future.

The search—in a spirit of unity and trust—for a successful and just way out of this very grave trial for world politics at its new stage, strengthens the hope for the possibility of a political solution to all international problems, even the most complex.

The presidents agreed to maintain continuous contact during these anxious days.

Churkin Details Negotiations With 'Aziz on Gulf

LD2202150991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1354 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev, Oleg Polovko, and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—The Soviet side is under no circumstances planning to send its troops to the Persian Gulf region. This was stated by Vitaliy Churkin, head of the Foreign Ministry's Information Directorate, at a briefing today. The diplomat also stressed that this decision is firm and that its fate does not depend on the results of negotiations on a political settlement to the conflict in the Gulf as put forward by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Vitaliy Churkin told journalists that a meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Tariq 'Aziz "has not taken place, and is not being held" today after completion of talks between the USSR and Iraqi foreign ministers. At the same time he did not rule out the possibility of holding such a meeting, having noted that the Iraqi minister is staying in Moscow.

Vitaliy Churkin reported on the "obvious progress" at the talks that took place today between Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, USSR minister of foreign affairs; Yevgeniy Primakov, personal representative of the USSR president; and Tariq 'Aziz, Iraq's foreign minister. These talks took place on the basis of the points of the plan first put forward by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Vitaliy Churkin did not reveal the details of the talks held, stating only that "as a whole, the talk was about the fulfillment of the UN Security Council resolutions—in particular Resolution No. 660; that is, the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait."

All the main formulations of the discussed clauses "have been worked off and given precise definition," he reported. The USSR president is getting in touch with leaders of member countries of the UN Security Council.

Answering journalists' questions, Vitaliy Churkin amplified that those points in the plan that were announced by the leader of the press service of the USSR President last night "represented the line to which we had taken the Iraqi side in the process of discussion between the USSR president and Tariq 'Aziz" during the discussion last night.

Vitaliy Churkin expressed the view that "such a moment" has now arrived "when intensive diplomatic contacts are capable of bringing the desired results."

Primakov Views Talks With 'Aziz, Gorbachev Plan

LD2302182591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1511 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov by announcer Tomas Kolesnichenko in Moscow on 22 February; from the "International Panorama" program—recorded]

[Text] [Kolesnichenko] Hello comrades. Spring is just around the corner and it looks as if winter is behind us. As far as our foreign policy is concerned, Moscow has been the whole world's diplomatic center of gravity all this week. The chief sensation, it can be said, were the talks between the USSR president and Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs, and the Gorbachev plan. As correctly noted by UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, the Soviet initiative proved to be a unique chance for a peaceful settlement of the crisis in the Persian Gulf, and that is now recognized by the majority of political observers. Life has not spoiled us with successes of late, but it can be said that on this we really did score an impressive success. If this chance is not lost, the bloodshed and the deaths of thousands of completely innocent people will stop. More and more are dying: there has been a clear tendency of late for the United States and its allies to go beyond the framework of the mandate they were given by the UN Security Council. That is why the Soviet initiative is so timely. How are events developing? To be honest, they are so swift that we can hardly keep up. Yesterday morning we met Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov, who took part in the Soviet-Iraqi talks.

Yevgeniy Maksimovich, I know that it's been a tumultuous and dramatic night. You spent all of it here. Could you give us the details of what happened in the Kremlin over night?

[Primakov] It really was a dramatic night, and I did really spend it here. But we're not here to talk about me, of course. Everyone was up through the night. President Gorbachev received Tariq 'Aziz, who only flew into Moscow at midnight. He was immediately taken to the Kremlin for a meeting with Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. I also attended the meeting. In actual fact, the Gorbachev plan had already been proposed—that is our notional name for it, although perhaps the name is not so notional.

[Kolesnichenko] Perhaps you could give us the details of the plan?

[Primakov] You know, tomorrow...today, straight from here, I'm rushing off for the continuation of the talks. The details are being honed, but I can give you the skeleton immediately. Of course, it's only the skeleton. The fact is that Iraq has accepted the Soviet proposals, President Gorbachev's proposals, that it should withdraw its troops unconditionally and fully from Kuwait. That is the most important thing. But naturally, the withdrawal must take place in a certain timeframe. It should evidently begin the day after the cease-fire, because no one should shoot anyone in the back. This withdrawal should be followed, or, linked with the ending of economic sanctions against Iraq. That is natural, because the sanctions were in fact imposed because Iraq sent its troops to Kuwait and since it is pulling them out, the sanctions should be lifted. Then the resolutions that were adopted after Iraq refused to pull its troops out of Kuwait should be lifted altogether, or, if you like, they should no longer apply. I refer to the resolutions of the UN Security Council.

[Kolesnichenko] But I know, Yevgeniy Maksimovich...

[Primakov, interrupting] There's another very sore point: the immediate release of prisoners of war, of course. This is a very crucial matter for the Americans.

[Kolesnichenko] I understand, but the Security Council also adopted resolutions on compensation. They are, of course, not of such importance and there is no danger that Washington will seize on them as the reason...

[Primakov,interrupting] A great danger exists, because in the second part of the night Gorbachev had a conversation with Bush and literally, all in all, it seems to me that this conversation was stopping Bush from acting, is that not so, because the military mechanism has been primed and weapons have been cocked, as it were, and the troops are in an absolute state of readiness and so if they do not go into action they cannot remain in this absolute state of readiness for long, everyone understands that.

[Kolesnichenko] Is there a guarantee that a war will not now be started...

[Primakov, interrupting] No one can give you any kind of guarantees on anything. But now, if this war starts today, it will start and the whole world will see that it has been started in circumstances where the Soviet Union has indeed accomplished a tremendous achievement in the efforts to find a political settlement and this achievement has a real and contrasting shape here and, if at this moment it is frustrated by a war, then those who have started it will take upon themselves the responsibility.

Iraq's 'Aziz Holds News Conference, Departs

Expresses Support for Peace Plan

LD2302112291 Moscow TASS in English 1014 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev, Sergey Postanogov, and Yuriy Rublevskiy]

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz said at a news conference in Moscow today that the Iraqi Government fully approved the six-point plan for a political settlement in the Gulf that was agreed upon during the Soviet-Iraqi talks and announced on Friday, and fully supported it.

'Aziz said the Iraqi Government flatly dismissed the U.S. Administration's contentions that Iraq created a new ecological situation in the occupied Kuwait.

'Aziz also stated that Iraq asks the U.N. Security Council to set up immediately a committee to investigate the situation in Kuwait.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz announced here today that the Iraqi Government fully approved the six-point plan for a political settlement in the Gulf that was agreed upon at the Soviet-Iraqi talks in Moscow and announced on Friday, and fully supported it.

'Aziz is visiting the Soviet Union in conjunction with consultations on the plan for a peace settlement of the conflict in the Gulf, that was advanced by President Mikhail Gorbachev on February 18.

Speaking at a news conference here today, 'Aziz recalled the six points of this plan:

—Iraq agrees to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 660 and, therefore, is ready to withdraw immediately and unconditionally all of its troops from Kuwait to positions, on which they were deployed on August 1, 1990
—troop withdrawal will begin on the day after all land, sea and air military operations are halted and a ceasefire takes effect
—the withdrawal will be implemented within 21 days, including the withdrawal from the city of Kuwait within the first four days of the aforementioned timeframe
—immediately following the completion of the troop withdrawal from Kuwait, the grounds for all of the remaining U.N. Security Council resolutions will be eliminated and these resolutions will thus become invalid
—all prisoners of war will be released and repatriated within three days after the ceasefire and the termination of all military operations
—the ceasefire and troop withdrawal will be confirmed and will be monitored by observers or peacekeeping forces under the auspices of the U.N. Security Council.

"The Iraqi Government fully approves this plan and fully supports it," 'Aziz said.

He also noted that Iraq "highly appreciates and fully supports the Soviet Union's efforts to achieve a peace settlement."

'Aziz expressed particular gratitude to President Gorbachev and the Soviet Government for the role they had played in the search for a political settlement to the conflict.

At the same time, 'Aziz stated that the Iraqi Government flatly rejected the U.S. Administration's contentions that Iraq created a new ecological situation in the occupied Kuwait. In this regard, 'Aziz announced that "the Iraqi Government asks the U.N. Security Council to set up immediately a committee to investigate the situation in Kuwait."

"If the American authorities want to use this pretext for justifying their aggressive stance, this pretext has no grounds whatsoever," 'Aziz added.

Departs After News Conference

LD2302124991 Moscow TASS in English 1226 GMT 23 Feb 91

[by TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz left Moscow today. He visited the Soviet Union to harmonise the provisions of a plan for specific actions to achieve a peace settlement of the armed conflict in the Gulf, which was generated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The plan was advanced by President Mikhail Gorbachev on February 18.

During his stay in the Soviet capital, 'Aziz met Gorbachev and held intensive talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and Soviet Presidential Envoy Yevgeniy Primakov.

Addressing a news conference in Moscow before the departure, 'Aziz announced that the Iraqi Government fully approved and supported the six-point plan for a political settlement in the Gulf that was elaborated during the Soviet-Iraqi talks.

At the same time, 'Aziz flatly rejected the U.S. Administration's contentions that Iraq created a new ecological situation in the occupied Kuwait. In this regard, 'Aziz stated that Iraq asks the U.N Security Council to set up a committee to investigate the situation.

Ignatenko Briefs Press 23 Feb on Gulf

Outlines Efforts To Avert War

LD2302174691 Moscow TASS in English 1712 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Peskov]

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—The search for ways to a peaceful settlement of the Gulf conflict was the main topic of the telephone conversations that President Gorbachev had today with leaders of a number of countries.

Head of the president's press service Vitaliy Ignatenko said at a briefing here today that Gorbachev had had telephone conversations with French President Francois Mitterrand, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, British Prime Minister John Major, Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. Soon he will have a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

On the same day Gorbachev met Rajiv Gandhi, who had a stopover in Moscow. Gorbachev's conversations with President Bush and Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu are a probability. There will be no more contacts with the Iraqi side, Ignatenko said.

The Soviet Union wishes to use the last hours, left to Iraq by the Bush ultimatum, for preventing "tragic developments" in the Gulf zone, Ignatenko said. It these developments still take place, "one shall only deplore that the world community has been unable to take advantage of the extensive opportunities, especially during the past several days, for avoiding that tragic phase, for not increasing the number of casualties both on the side of the multinational forces and on the side of Iraq," he pointed out.

Ignatenko stressed that all leaders with whom Gorbachev had had conversations had expressed heartfelt gratitude to him for his peace efforts and had stressed that regarded them "with understanding and respect".

Touching upon talks with Tariq 'Aziz in Moscow, Ignatenko said that the six items of the plan are "the maximum that we managed to get from Iraq".

Responding to the question what could still be done during the remaining hours, Ignatenko said that "a chance could be provided by an urgent convocation of the U.N. Security Council". It would be possible to integrate at its session all previous peace proposals.

Commenting on the latest proposals of the U.S. President, Ignatenko said that "we have analysed them carefully" and "understand them completely". "The problem is how they can be integrated into the programme that would lead us to a peaceful solution," he added.

Responding to the question about a possibility of granting a political asylum to Saddam Husayn by the Soviet Union, he said that "this problem has not been discussed. Nobody has made such a request to us and, I hope, never will." Ignatenko [words indistinct] the sending of Soviet troops to the Gulf area is out of the quesion, whatever the circumstances.

Believes Iraqi Attitude Will Change

LD2302214191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2108 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Peskov]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Feb (TASS)—The Iraqi attitude to the U.S. "ultimatum" "will change," Vitaliy Ignatenko, head of the USSR president's press service, believes. Speaking late on Saturday evening at a briefing at the USSR Foreign Ministry press center, he noted at the same time that so far he has not heard any specific announcement from the Iraqi side with regard to this.

Vitaliy Ignatenko reported on the telephone conversations between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and leaders of a number of countries that took place on Saturday afternoon. The Soviet leader, he said, was in touch with U.S. President George Bush, FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Iranian President Rafsanjani, and Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu. Talking about the conversation between the Soviet and U.S. presidents, Vitaliy Ignatenko said that it passed off "in a spirit of frankness, with understanding of the responsibility that is placed on their shoulders."

In making a general appraisal of the efforts being undertaken by the world community to settle the crisis, Vitaliy Ignatenko pointed out that the unprecedented unity of the world community in condemning Iraq's aggression and in its resolve the stop that aggression would have been impossible without the new nature of Soviet-U.S. relations and the radical change in the situation in Europe.

The credit for the fact that until today the chance of a peaceful resolution of the conflict was very close belongs to the whole community, to those countries that really wanted this, Vitaliy Ignatenko said. "There are no specific winners here," he pointed out. "It is a general movement, and nobody would wish to declare himself a sole leader and claim the laurels as a super-successful politician."

The head of the USSR president's press service pointed out that Iraq has missed the chance today for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and it only remains to be hoped that "common sense will prevail" and that even in this situation when all possibilities have been exhausted "Iraq will find the courage to pull its troops out of Kuwait."

Gorbachev Call to Japan's Kaifu Described

OW2302234191 Tokyo KYODO in English 2326 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tokyo, Feb. 24 KYODO—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev urged Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu on Sunday for his support of a Soviet peace plan for an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait, Foreign Ministry officials said.

In a 20-minute telephone talk early Sunday morning, Gorbachev asked Kaifu to use Japan's "close ties" with the United States to help prevent the Gulf war from turning into a tragedy, officials said.

It was the first telephone conversation ever between the two leaders, they said.

Gorbachev told Kaifu that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is ready to pull out troops from Kuwait City within four days and from the whole of Kuwait within three weeks.

Gorbachev called for Japan's support of a Soviet peace plan, which calls for a complete Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait within 21 days, compared to one week sought by the U.S.-led alliance.

The six-point plan, worked out between Gorbachev and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz, urges Iraq to begin withdrawing troops from Kuwait the day after a ceasefire.

Kaifu appreciated Moscow's efforts toward achieving peace in the Gulf but said he finds the Soviet peace plan still insufficient, the officials said.

They said the prime minister expressed hope that Gorbachev will take leadership to persuade Iraq into pulling out immediately and unconditionally as required by U.N. resolutions.

The Soviet president talked with Kaifu about an hour after the U.S.-set deadline for Iraq to begin pulling out of Kuwait passed at 1700 GMT (2 A.M. Japan time).

Soviet Spokesman Vitaliy Ignatenko, in a press conference in Moscow and aired live by American television, said that Gorbachev also called other leaders of the international community.

Officials quoted Kaifu as saying that he was looking forward to seeing Gorbachev in April in Tokyo. Gorbachev replied he hopes his visit will be an important one.

Gorbachev is scheduled to visit Japan on April 16-19 to become the first Kremlin leader ever to do so.

Gandhi Views Gulf War, Talks With Gorbachev

LD2402111391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0943 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Ivanov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 24 February (TASS)—Rajiv Gandhi described the ground offensive against Iraqi troops which started this morning with participation of U.S. troops and those of other states, members of the multinational forces, "as overstepping UN Security Council Resolution 678." Before leaving for Tehran, the chairman of the Indian National Congress Party (I), who stopped in Moscow, spoke at a press conference for Soviet and foreign journalists today. [passage omitted]

Speaking about his conversation with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on Saturday, Rajiv Gandhi noted that the well-known proposals of the Soviet leader which were developed during talks with the Iraqi foreign minister took into account numerous UN resolutions on the Persian Gulf and created sound possibilities for a peaceful settlement to the conflict, which, unfortunately, have been lost. Clarifying, at an AP correspondent's request, what "motivation", in his view, guided the Soviet president in proposing his plan, Gandhi described the USSR president as an individual adhering to peace who is concerned about the use of military means in solving conflicts.

Rajiv Gandhi was asked about the Soviet leader's "mood" in connection with the situation in the Persian Gulf. The chairman of the Indian National Congress Party (I) noted that, in his view, Mikhail Gorbachev thinks that Iraq started to make an adequate response to the situation and that it is important that the United States, for its part, "also starts moving." However, Gandhi had the impression that the Soviet leader understands how difficult it would be to avoid further escalation of the conflict.

Vorontsov Briefs Perez de Cuellar on Peace Talks

LD2302110191 Moscow TASS in English 0900 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Kochetkov]

[Text] United Nations February 23 TASS—Soviet U.N. Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov on Friday evening informed U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar about the situation at talks in Moscow to settle the Iraq-Kuwait crisis.

American U.N. Ambassador Thomas Pickering brought to Perez de Cuellar's knowledge the U.S. stance on settling the crisis.

A meeting of the U.N. Security Council is not expected to be called in the next few hours, TASS was told at the U.N. Secretariat.

It is pointed out here that at this meeting Soviet representatives should inform the Security Council members about the results achieved at talks in Moscow and about Baghdad's response to the document defining ways to resolve the crisis, that was harmonised at talks.

It is believed here that a Security Council meeting can begin not earlier than 10:00 New York time (18:00 Moscow time).

If Baghdad's response is positive, work will urgently get under way at the U.N. to draft a Security Council resolution that should, as is believed here, reflect the provisions of the document agreed upon in Moscow as well as the U.S. proposal.

Preparations have already been launched in the U.N. to set up a U.N. task force to be sent to Kuwait if Iraq begins to pull out its troops from that country.

U.N. Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding, who is responsible for U.N. peacekeeping operations, held consultations with countries that can contribute forces to U.N. peacekeeping operations. Although it is not reported which countries are at point, it is believed here that basically servicemen from north European countries are planned to be committed to this operation. TASS was told at the U.N. Secretariat that a team of U.N. observers will be formed to include this military personnel. Those were preliminary consultations so that in case of need the U.N. chief could act promptly and submit to the Security Council a plan to set up such a team of observers.

Perez de Cuellar said in the United Nations they wanted Iraq to withdraw its troops from Kuwait quickly and completely. He declined to comment, at journalists' request, on the U.S. ultimatum to Iraq to begin leaving Kuwait by noon New York time of Feburary 23.

Perez de Cuellar said he sincerely hoped that the two positions would be harmonised as soon as possible. He thinks that the core differences between the document agreed upon in Moscow and the U.S. proposals were in the timetable for Iraqi troop withdrawal from Kuwait and the U.S. demand that all U.N. Security Council resolutions that were adopted during the crisis remain in force even after the complete withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Speaks at Security Council

LD2302175591 Moscow TASS in English 1715 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Kochetkov]

[Text] United Nations February 23 TASS—The U.N. Security Council had an urgent session behind closed doors today. It heard a report of Soviet representative at the United Nations Yuliy Vorontsov about the results of the talks in Moscow on the settlement of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti crisis. Members of the Security Council are expected to exchange views on possible further steps to be taken towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Syrian Defense Minister on Saddam's 'Schemes'

LD2302165391 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Remarks by Syrian Defense Minister M. Talas during an "interview" with unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] Saddam Husayn has put the Iraqi soldier in an extremely complicated position. Why must he die, defending a land which the Iraqi president has taken from his Arab brothers? The soldier understands this.

The ruler of Baghdad counted on playing the role of gendarme in the Persian Gulf zone and probably thought that the Americans and we would allow this. But his schemes did not work. If Saddam Husayn is really concerned about solving the Palestinian problem, then he would have turned to us in the first place. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has the largest army in the region confronting Israel. Against all logic, however, he went along another path, announcing that the liberation of Palestine supposedly begins with the seizure of Kuwait. This is a mistake for which there is no justification. I am convinced that after the crisis is settled the Iraqi people themselves will not tolerate him in power. The Iraqis must now understand that their present leader is a gambler. For it is he who has subjected them to severe ordeals. We intend to support the forces opposing Iraq so as to create real people's power in that country.

Defense Ministry Denies Military Delegation in Iraq

LD2202155191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1515 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—A report has appeared in foreign media that a delegation of the general staff of the USSR Armed Forces is allegedly staying in Iraq. This does not correspond with the facts, says a report by the USSR Defense Ministry press center that was circulated today.

In this connection, the comment notes, one cannot but draw attention to the persistence with which certain foreign circles, making use of any means, are trying to find "proof" of the Soviet Union's direct participation in the armed conflict in the Middle East. There were, for instance, reports that the USSR is allegedly supplying intelligence data to Iraq and the United States; that our country is allegedly continuing military supplies to Baghdad; that Soviet military specialists have been working in Iraq also after the start of military operations.

Despite the fact that all previous fabrications have been officially denied, a mythical delegation has now been added to the series of fabrications. It is not difficult to guess that all this is being done with a view to discrediting the basic Soviet stance on the issue of the crisis in the Persian Gulf area. There is no doubt that such disinformation can be spread only by someone who is not interested in a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the USSR Defense Ministry press center stresses.

Chemical Troops Chief on CW Use in Gulf War

PM2202224191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 23 Feb 91 First Edition p 3

["Topical Interview" with Colonel General S.V. Petrov, chief of Chemical Troops, by unidentified KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent; date, place not given; first paragraph is editorial introduction: "But the 'Chemical' War Has Already Begun..."]

[Text] Now that Iraq has accepted the Soviet plan for a peaceful settlement of the crisis, there is the hope that combat actions in the Persian Gulf zone will cease. However, there is a danger, a serious one at that, that the war will continue. How real, in that event, is the threat of the use of chemical weapons? KRASNAYA ZVEZDA put this question to Col. Gen. S.V. Petrov, chief of Chemical Troops.

[Petrov] Chemical weapons in the broadest sense have already been used on the territory of Iraq as a result of strikes by aircraft and missiles against facilities for the production and storage of munitions containing chemical agents.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] How effective might the use of chemical agents on the battlefield be from the military viewpoint?

[Petrov] Chemical weapons are effective from the military viewpoint if they are used on a massive scale. According to the U.S. journal CHEMICAL AND ENGINEERING NEWS, Iraq has types of chemical munitions containing mustard gas, tabun, and sarin. According to the Washington Institute of Near Eastern Politics, Iraq has artillery shells and rockets, air-to-surface and surface-to-surface missiles, mines, and aircraft bombs containing these chemical agents. In my view, the massive use of aircraft weapons containing chemical agents is unlikely, since the multinational force has aerial supremacy. This also applies to chemical agents delivered by missiles. Therefore, one should not expect the use of chemical weapons to bring Iraq any significant results.

Of course, the use of chemical weapons in desert conditions is bound to affect the actions of the troops. The hot climate, the absence of large quantities of water, the need to keep gas masks and protective clothing on for long periods—these are all far from easy questions. Now, we are constantly seeing on television U.S. soldiers and other multinational force soldiers in gas masks. Believe me, it is very difficult spending long periods wearing even such a modern gas mask as the U.S. M17A1, for instance. But, I repeat, the effectiveness of chemical weapons from the viewpoint of affecting combat actions would be small.

If Iraq were to strike big cities, that would be a different matter. Then losses could run into thousands. But they would be primarily civilians.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Would there be a danger to our country if such weapons were used in the war?

[Petrov] There has been information in the foreign press to the effect that nerve gas has has been discovered somewhere in Saudi Arabia in very small, evidently barely perceptible concentrations. But I rather tend to think that this is not the result of the use of chemical weapons by Iraq. It is more likely to be the result of the destruction of a chemical weapons dump by U.S. and allied air strikes somewhere in the immediate operational-tactical or tactical zone.

Now as for the Soviet Union and adjacent states. If major storage facilities containing 500 and more tonnes of chemical agents were destroyed, it would result in the death of the civilian population within a radius of dozens of kilometers from the storage facilities. I believe that even in cases like that people living in our southern republics—Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkmenia—

would not be in danger. Large mountain areas and considerable altitude variations would prevent air currents from carrying chemical agents as far as our borders in any significant concentrations.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] In your view, have the U.S. and allied aircraft succeeded in destroying Iraq's stocks of chemical weapons?

[Petrov] Personally, I believe that the Americans should not have hit chemical weapons storage facilities. This provokes Iraq into using these weapons. Whether the danger of the use of chemical weapons has diminished or not can be judged from data in the U.S. press again. At the beginning of the war in the Gulf the press was filled with enthusiastic articles about allied air strikes wiping out everything: aircraft destroyed, bases destroyed. But the euphoria passed as time went on. It transpired that the results of the strikes were not that brilliant. The same can be said about chemical weapons facilities. One must assume that Husayn has kept such an important argument in war as chemical weapons well hidden.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] In your view, how will the war in the Gulf affect the chemical disarmament process?

[Petrov] The events that are currently unfolding could directly influence the position of the states in the course of the talks on a complete ban on the production, development, and stockpiling of chemical weapons. The point is that many countries in the so-called Third World may well decide that if they had chemical weapons people would begin to see them as a force to be reckoned with. Just as they see Iraq as a force to be reckoned with. Many could be tempted even to use this trump card—chemical weapons—in their political activity. Therefore the prospects for the signing of an all-embracing convention on banning and finally destroying chemical weapons are much worse now, in my opinion, than before the war in the Persian Gulf.

NHK Interviews Ignatenko on Peace Proposal

OW2202145791 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1109 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Interview with Vitaliy Ignatenko, spokesman for President Gorbachev, by NHK newscaster Hatsuhisa Takashima; Ignatenko is at the NHK Moscow Bureau studio and Takashima is at the NHK studios in Tokyo—live, in English with superimposed translation into Japanese]

[Text] [Takashima] Thank you very much for joining us. This is my first question. What is happening now in Moscow?

[Ignatenko] It is just noon. Two and one-half hours from now, President Gorbachev is scheduled to hold a news conference with domestic and foreign reporters. Foreign ministerial talks have been underway this morning, and the talks are very intensive. Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh and Iraqi Foreign Minister 'Aziz are holding talks. Mr. Primakov, who is well known to the Japanese media, is also present at the talks. Approximately one hour after these talks, President Gorbachev and Foreign Minister 'Aziz are scheduled to meet face to face in the Kremlin. This is the situation in Moscow.

[Takashima] Thank you for providing such information. You announced the eight-point peace proposal. My second question concerns whether or not the peace proposal will bring peace?

[Ignatenko] I think that I announced the seven-point peace proposal; the eight-point peace proposal is supplementary to the seven-point peace proposal. I believe that an opportune time has come for normalization. The first point in particular calls for unconditional and complete withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. I think that that point is very important. The other points were added on the basis of that initial point.

[Takashima] According to reports from Washington, the United States appears to view the seven-point peace proposal or the eight- point peace proposal as insufficient and short of meeting the demands set by the UN resolutions. What do you think?

[Ignatenko] This is the U.S. reaction that Moscow has anticipated. Mr. Gorbachev had a one-hour telephone conversation with Mr. Bush, and during the conversation, we, for the first time, identified the substance of an announcement the United States plans to make. In our analysis, this is a most important lesson and achievement between the Soviet Union and the United States. The presidents and authorities of the two countries understand quite well the present period, and they are concerned over this present time. In other words, they intend to overcome this international crisis through political means. We recognize the efforts made by the United Nations and the nations participating in the multinational forces. Mr. Gorbachev talked with Mr. Bush about this point. The United States has conditions of its own, and I think that the conditions should not be ignored. Needless to say, I think that we must seriously study these conditions. I think that Iraq must also study them. I do not know how these conditions would be handled at the United Nations, or at the UN Security Council, or at bilateral talks between the United States and Iraq.

[Takashima] Is there a possibility that the Soviet Union or Iraq might change or amend the seven-point peace proposal?

[Ignatenko] Quite naturally, the respective positions, which were made public today, are being studied by both Foreign Minister Bessmertnkh and Foreign Minister 'Aziz. Therefore, a foundation was built today. I think that any changes, amendments, or even new proposals are possible based on this foundation. However, I do not think any major conversion will occur.

[Takashima] My next question concerns the cease-fire and withdrawal. When will the withdrawal occur, and how long will it take?

[Ignatenko] You have asked a very interesting question regarding the withdrawal. The most important aspect is the length of the withdrawal. A certain period has been suggested. However, a fixed certain period can last one year or one week. Regarding this point, we are trying to win the understanding of the Iraqi side, and we are intending to gain an Iraq pull out of Kuwait at the earliest possible date. This is what all the people in the world are seeking. Therefore, I think that the role of the nations participating in the multinational forces and the United Nations is very important.

[Takashima] This next question concerns President Husayn's regime. Do you think that he will remain in power after Iraq pulls out of Kuwait and peace is restored?

[Ignatenko] What regime should be formed and who should lead that regime is a question to be settled by the people of the nation concerned. If the Iraqi people want another regime or leader, this is an internal affair of that country. At the present stage, therefore, I am not in a position to forecast anything concerning your question; I think that politicians should not do so. This is a question to be settled by the Iraqi people themselves.

[Takashima] Then, what will become the Iraqi military strength? Will Iraq's military strength remain intact, or will it by and large be reduced?

[Ignatenko] You asked about the Iraqi military strength. I would like to add something that I have not previously mentioned in this interview. Iraq has biochemical weapons, and fortunately, Iraq has not used them. If that country had used them, it would have been greatly unfortunate for the world and would have brought a big catastrophe to the world. I think that we achieved a big victory this time by removing the possibility of Iraq using them. I think that Iraq's current military strength is totally different from what it was in the past. It used to be ranked fourth in the world in terms of the number of troops. However, I think that this is now different than the past. I think that in the future, various considerations will have to be given as to what sort of Iraqi military will be maintained in the region.

[Takashima] This is my last question, and it concerns the question of who is responsible for the war. The Iraqi Government destroyed Kuwait after invading it. What do you think of the war reparations question?

[Ignatenko] Yes, the war reparations is a serious and important question. This question is included in UN resolutions. At present, this question has not been brought up at the talks in Moscow. This is a question to be resolved in the future. What is most important at the present stage is a cease-fire to end combat actions, the withdrawal of the troops, and the restoration of the legitimate government in Kuwait. These are the most important issues. I think that in response to the cease-fire, a new multitude of problems will arise and war reparations will be among them. That is the responsibility for having inflicted damage and loss to the sovereign state of Kuwait.

[Takashima] Mr. Ignatenko, thank very much.

Commentaries, Reports View Ground Offensive

PRAVDA on Battle, Baghdad Situation

PM2402205591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
25 Feb 91 Second Edition pp 1,6

[Report by A. Lopukhin, V. Snegirev from Baghdad: "The Guns Started Before Dawn"]

[Text] Unfortunately, it proved impossible to avert more bloodshed. As we file these lines fighting is going on along the entire enormous front. There is no need for even military dispatches to state with confidence that there are already considerable losses on both sides.

The fragile hope of a peaceful solution to the conflict was blown apart after Iraq refused to meet the Americans' ultimatum. Many observers were skeptical toward this demand. First, the U.S. President would not give up continuing fire, under which it is simply difficult to get troops out of their shelters without exposing them to attack. Second, the ultimatum deadline for withdrawal was deliberately unrealistic: Lacking the possibility of using transport aircraft and having lost a considerable proportion of their trucks, the Iraqis could not have moved their thousands-strong armada immediately, however much they may have wanted to.

It has to be said that hitherto, when filing our information from Baghdad we have only written about things we have seen with our own eyes, giving readers the opportunity to draw their own conclusions. Today we cannot confine ourselves to this.

Indeed, as a result of unprecedented diplomatic efforts, after shuttle visits to Moscow by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz and after a whole series of fundamental concessions by his government, it would seem that there was nothing stopping the warring sides from departing in peace. But... It transpires that the sound prediction was the one made by those who considered that the allies' main objective is not only the liberation of Kuwait but the destruction of Iraq's military-industrial might...

Midnight coincided with the start of a protracted missile and bomb attack. And Saturday morning greeted us with a thick film of black smoke all over the sky.

That day journalists were offered a visit to damaged power stations. The biggest of them, recently modernized with help from the Italians, is on the outskirts of Baghdad. It provides energy not only to Baghdad but also to an oil refinery complex. But four bombs destroyed the turbine hall and the control panel. "It will take a minimum of two years and $500 million to restore it," general manager A. Deukher said. The second power station we were shown is on the outskirts of Taji and was built with the assistance of the Japanese firm of Hitachi. Now it too will essentially have to be rebuilt. No matter how this war ends, it is already clear that enormous damage has been done to the Iraqi economy.

The first report in Baghdad about the start of the ground war came at 1030, when S. Husayn addressed the Army and the people on radio. In particular, he described the attack as "an inhuman crime against Iraq." Allah will help us repulse the aggression, the president said. He exorted the troops to halt the enemy.

As yet the situation in Baghdad remains calm. Admittedly the air-raid sirens are sounding almost continuously.

Diplomacy Not 'Ruled Out'

PM2402194591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
25 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[IZVESTIYA press service report: "Chronicle of Dramatic Hours"]

[Excerpts] So it proved impossible to avert the most dangerous phase of the war in the Persian Gulf—the land battle for Kuwait. But the USSR's diplomatic efforts aimed at seeking a diplomatic solution continued right up to the last fatal moment: Moscow did everything in its power. But Iraq did not display a clear wish to withdraw its troops from Kuwait unconditionally and immediately, and the allies in the anti-Iraq coalition did not believe in the sincerity of the statement by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz, who said in Moscow that Baghdad was prepared to do this. He said that Iraq accepted the Soviet peace initiative in its slightly amended form. In particular, it presupposed the withdrawal of Iraqi troops within 21 days (it was to have begun the day after a cease-fire) given the consent of the United States and its allies to a number of other points in the program. The biggest problem complicating the situation was the shortage of time, which made the possibility of negotiations and the quest for compromise more difficult. [passage omitted]

Giving a general assessment of the world community's efforts to settle the crisis, V. Ignatenko, leader of the USSR's president's press service, noted late Saturday evening that the world community's unique unity in condemning Iraq's aggression and determination to stop it would have been impossible without the new character of Soviet-U.S. relations and the fundamental change in the situation in Europe. Iraq, he stressed, passed up the chance to resolve the conflict peacefully, and it only remains to be hoped that common sense will prevail and that even in this situation, when all the possibilities have been exhausted, Baghdad will find the courage to withdraw its troops from Kuwait.

But on Saturday it became clear from a statement by the Iraqi Revolution Command Council that Baghdad was rejecting the allies' ultimatum. And when the multinational forces launched their ground offensive on Saturday night, Baghdad Radio stated its determination to continue the war. Sunday morning Saddam Husayn made an address to the nation in which he exhorted the Iraqi troops to repulse the offensive and expressed confidence in victory.

But the fact that the land battle has started does not mean that any diplomatic efforts for a peace settlement are now ruled out. On the contrary: The more resolutely that diplomats speak out, the greater the chances that the guns will be able to fall silent sooner.

'Fine Slogans' Hide 'Selfish Aims'

PM2402205791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
25 Feb 91 First Edition p 5

[Report by PRAVDA correspondent V. Belyakov: "Agonizing Questions"]

[Text] Riyadh-Cairo, 24 Feb—

Eyewitness' Impressions

The news that allied forces had begun ground operations against Iraqi troops found me in Cairo. I had left behind quiet Riyadh and working Al-Jubayl, defending itself against the oil slick... Let me be blunt and say that the news is in many respects unexpected since real prospects of peace had been opening up. The question of Iraqi formations withdrawing from Kuwait without carnage and unnecessary casualties had now become purely technical. There was talk of the next day or two. It seemed that now it was all behind us. Yet now we have a fresh outbreak of bloodshed. In the light of this development my impressions of the trip particularly give me no peace.

Yes, in capturing and annexing Kuwait, Iraq flagrantly violated international laws. Yes, Kuwait should once again be independent and free as it was prior to 2 August last year. Yes, the use of any means, including military means—as the UN Charter and decisions and ordinary human morality acknowledge—are admissible to attain this goal.

All that is true. All the same war, even a just war, means death and destruction; it you like, it is a matter of collectively punishing peoples for the crimes of their rulers. Both the Iraqis and the allies are still keeping mum about the number of casualties among the peaceful population. It pays for both sides to keep quiet. The former so as not to worry an already distressed population, the latter so as to reassure the world public. Can you believe that almost 100,000 bombing raids on Iraq, no matter what super-accurate or "smart" bombs were used, failed to affect its women, old people, and children? Or did this happen just once by mistake last week when almost 400 people lost their lives in a Baghdad bomb shelter? I personally cannot believe that. I am absolutely convinced that far more people have died in Iraq during the month or more of bombing than during the six-month Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Now that the ground war has begun, Kuwaitis will certainly die too—the very people whom the allies came to liberate—not to mention the soldiers on the opposing sides. "Iraq's losses have probably reached 200,000," A. Mansur, an observer for Cairo's leading AL-AHRAM, believes. "Moreover, only half of them are military. It is the greatest lie of this war to claim that it is bloodless."

Several evenings in succession I attended briefings given by representatives of the allied command at the Hyatt Regency in Riyadh and every time the indifference with which imposing men with general's stars spoke about the course of military operations grated on me. "The targets have been hit," "secondary explosions were observed," "an enemy patrol has been eliminated"... It was exactly the same with regard to their own losses, which were sometimes due to "friendly" fire—to put it bluntly, their own fire. As if it was not a question of men's lives, but of a game using some intricate computer program that sometimes malfunctions. Journalists' questions about the consequences of the bombings invariably met with the terse answer: "Our policy is to avoid casualties among the peaceful population."

Sometimes I even thought that the generals were not real, that they were actors in disguise. The actual briefings were, certainly, reminiscent of a well-rehearsed performance. What if journalists were left with dozens of questions unasked? So much the worse for them. The right to ask questions is accorded almost exclusively to the area in front of the dais and not to journalists sitting at the side because the area at the front was occupied by U.S. correspondents and, what is more, the sides were not visible to the television camera. How many times did I put up my hand at the side, hoping to ask General Johnston, chief of staff of the U.S. expeditionary corps, questions that concerned me, and was not honored with his attention.

The West has written plenty—and rightly so—about press complaints regarding the generals. According to my U.S. colleagues, many people in the Pentagon are still convinced that the Vietnam war was lost owing to the irresponsible behavior of journalists who aroused the antiwar movement with what they wrote. That is why the press is muzzled now. Now that the large-scale ground war has begun, briefings have been canceled altogether. Some correspondents have been divided into national news pools which have been attached to a unit of their own under the strict supervision of the local sergeant major. Reports from the pools are censored, not to mention the fact that it is not the journalists who choose the places they visit or their interlocutors.

Well, the questions that I wanted to ask simply remained unanswered. For instance, is it ethical to restore justice at the cost of thousands of innocent victims? To implant a new world order by fire and sword? Especially since peaceful means have clearly not been exhausted. But the allies headed by the United States preferred amputation to therapy.

Here is the first breakdown of logic that I stumbled across—the discrepancy between the end and the means. I was aware of the second previously since the Arab press, including in Egypt, had written a great deal about it since the Kuwaiti crisis first broke. The Israeli occupation of the Arab territories has lasted almost 25 years now. The Security Council adopted the well-known Resolution 242 on 22 November 1967 instructing Israel to pull out. But even now it has no intention of pulling out. While the United States has throughout this period literally not lifted a finger to make it comply. There is a double standard for you.

There is a great deal of indignant talk among officers in the multinational forces and journalists in Riyadh about Iraq's possible use of mass-destruction weapons. Excuse me, but where have the Iraqis obtained a whole arsenal of toxins and lethal bacteria? Perhaps, they have developed them themselves? No. Did they buy them from us? No again. Issue No. 5 of the U.S. weekly NEWSWEEK contains a list of Iraq's main arms suppliers. There are five of them—France, the USSR, Italy, the FRG, and the United States. So, according to this list, of these five only the Soviet Union sold the Iraqis traditional weapons alone. Iraq obtained nuclear technology from France and the FRG and chemical and biological technology from Italy, the FRG, and the United States. Even the Soviet "Scuds," with which Iraq is bombarding Israel and Saudi Arabia, were modernized using Western technology. So is this indignation sincere? What, the West did not know the kind of regime that it was arming and what might come of it? Of course, it did, but it hoped that all this would land on its enemy—Iran. There's another breakdown of logic for you—hypocrisy.

Finally, the course of the military operations itself. Although the allies categorically deny it, these operations have from the very outset assumed the nature of an all-out war against Iraq. Instead of concentrating on attaining the goal which the Security Council publicly announced and authorized—the liberation of Kuwait—the multinational forces have methodically destroyed their enemy's military-economic potential as a whole. It was only in February that they really began to bomb the positions of the crack Republican Guard units, for instance, in Kuwait and adjacent regions of Iraq. Everything in its proper order. There is one answer to all the questions asked at the briefings: "military installation." Tell me, what isn't a military installation nowadays? Provided of course that this concept is given a broad interpretation. The president controls his troops from his palace, the ruling party mobilizes the soldiers and the population from headquarters, the troops receive fuel from an oil refinery, food from poultry farms, and reinforcements from schools and institutes. In that case, the following can be considered military installations without particularly stretching the point: the post office because letters from home encourage soldiers, the button factory because the buttons hold up command personnel's pants, and even the lace-making workshop. It looks as though in order to liberate one country you have to wipe another off the face of the earth. No, there's another explanation: The allies wanted to overthrow the Iraqi regime and have already geared up public opinion accordingly. According to a poll published in the latest issue of NEWSWEEK, 84 percent of Americans consider it necessary to continue the war until the Baghdad regime is eliminated. That is the whole secret of the all-out war. Are they exceeding their authority? Undoubtedly.

The main objectives in this war, however, are not the overthrow of Saddam or defense of the oilfields, not to mention the liberation of Kuwait. At any rate that is what certain Saudis with whom I spoke during my assignment believe. In their opinion, the war is being waged above all to support U.S. claims to personally rule the roost in the world and to revive the Western economy by pumping many billions out of the wealthy Gulf countries into combat operations and the subsequent work of restoration.

Current events in the Persian Gulf area are sometimes described as a second Vietnam. I think that in terms of most parameters this war is unlike the Vietnam war, which was described as a "dirty" war. In terms of moral parameters it is virtually identical. The same selfish aims dressed up with fine slogans.

Need for Diplomacy Stressed

LD2502112991 Moscow World Service in English 0000 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The anti-Iraqi coalition is developing its offensive. Analysts say the present action by more than half a million U.S. troops, supported by military units of a number of other countries, is one of the major offensives after the war in Vietnam and, among desert operations, this is the largest since World War II.

Although the Security Council decision to drive Iraq out of Kuwait underlies the multinational coalition's offensive, the United States' decision to launch a large-scale war is open to debate. Washington has failed to use all means at its disposal to avert the current course of developments, which of course entails new American and other nations' casualties. The UN Security Council resolutions focus on Iraq's full and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. This could have been achieved without launching a large-scale war on the basis of the Soviet plan endorsed by Baghdad. Differences could have been settled by diplomatic means between the provisions of the plan and the stand taken by the United States. In telephone conversations with President Bush and leaders of a number of other countries, President Gorbachev made last minute efforts to help achieve a negotiated political settlement. Even when the U.S. ultimatum on Iraq was about to expire, it seemed the UN demand on the Iraqi withdrawal could be effected without going to war.

However, developments in the past few days showed a strange regularity. The closer Moscow's diplomacy approached a successful solution of the Gulf problem the more the Pentagon was stepping up preparations for a large-scale ground offensive. Doubt was growing about whether Washington was only after the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, or was it pursuing objectives outside the UN mandate. The last few weeks before the ground offensive gave enough evidence that the U.S. military effort in the Gulf is about to exceed the UN mandate. Allied aircraft carried out massive bombardments of Iraqi cities to destroy that country's infrastructure. News agencies report the coalition's combat units have already crossed into Iraq, and official U.S. statements of the past few days, which are an outright threat against Iraq, have actually nothing to do with the 12 resolutions of the Security Council. The leaders of a number of countries have been quick to point this out.

The haste with which the United States launched its ground offensive may well indicate tha the United States is seeking domination in the region. Despite the escalated military action in the Gulf, the international community must not give up its efforts to end the war as soon as possible. The Security Council should obviously take another look at the situation. Bombing and misile raids must not muffle the sound of diplomacy.

U.S. Said Pursuing Own Goals

LD2402134391 Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Yuriy Minayev commentary]

[Text] The UN Security Council made its latest attempts on Saturday to prevent ground operations, yet no compromise was reached, although many assessed the Soviet proposals as positive, giving hopes for a peaceful settlement in the Persian Gulf.

The world is thus witnessing a situation where members of the coalition preferred fighting to a peaceful solution of the conflict in the region. The recent visit of the Iraqi foreign minister to Moscow provided all grounds for it, although the Soviet plan [did] not fully coincide with earlier decisions. The United States refused to postpone the beginning of a ground offensive despite requests from the Soviet Union. It is impossible to justify the Iraqi aggression in Kuwait. At the same time it becomes increasingly obvious that having obtained the UN mandate to free Kuwait the United States pursues, along with the liberation of Kuwait, its own geopolitical goals in the region. The United States declared the region a zone of U.S. interests long before the crisis began. The United States had more than once tried to establish its domination in the region. It seems the United States understands that control of the richest oil region of the world will give it a good chance in an easy economic competition with western Europe and Japan.

Another likely goal is to weaken the Soviet Union's influence in the region. This is probably one of the reasons why the Soviet plan for a peaceful settlement in the Persian Gulf was rejected and the ground battle was launched. It will now take greater casualties to free Kuwait and the further course of event will show whether the UN mandate for liberating Kuwait will be observed, concludes Yuriy Minayev.

War May Provoke 'Unexpected' Change

LD2402145191 Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 24 Feb 91

[(Lev Sichayev) commentary]

[Text] It seems the multinational coalition intends to go further than simply liberating Kuwait. It seems to have committed itself to the idea of full political and economic destruction of Iraq and liquidation of its present regime. The U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition leaves no chance to Saddam Husayn, but history and every day experience shows that an approach like this can bring about the results opposite to the desired objective.

The Gulf developments may provoke unexpected changes in the political and economic fields, as well as in the environmental situation, and cause more human casualties. If President Husayn feels he is cornered, who will guarantee he will not use mass destruction weapons? If he does, no one will be able to either justify his actions or resurrect the victims. On the other hand, stocks of chemical and biological weapons that Iraq is believed to possess can be accidentally hit during combat action and all the countries of the region will fall victim to the ensuing disaster.

Possible remapping of the region can escalate instability. Bitter confrontation cannot be then ruled out among Iran, Syria, Jordan, Israel and other countries. Each of them would aspire to be regional leader, and each of them is backed by nations outside this particular region. These would willy-nilly find themselves involved in the developments.

As long as the Gulf war was a contest of aircraft and missiles, estimated casualties were put at dozens; now that large-scale ground operations have started, casualties will top hundreds and thousands. The new toll will be likely to change the public's view of the matter, both in the United States and the other members of the coalition. The coalition will be then threatened with a split. If the war is further escalated, consequences can be unpredictable for the United States, the Gulf region, and the world as a whole.

Logic of War Gained 'Upperhand'

LD2402162891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1454 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Commentary by political observer Askold Biryukov]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Feb (TASS)—The logic of war has gained the upperhand over good sense. At dawn today, on orders from U.S. President George Bush, General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the multinational forces, began land operations against Iraq "using all forces available."

Washington asserts that Iraq is to blame for what has happened since it failed to fulfill the ultimatum issued to it the day before. In my view, this assertion is simply an excuse, since by this time Baghdad had already agreed to withdraw its troops from Kuwait in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 660 and consequently the path was open toward shifting the conflict in the direction of a political settlement. What was needed was a day or two's hard work by all of the international community, primarily by the Security Council, to eliminate the differences on specific wording which would have enabled the opposing sides to secure a peaceful outcome of the conflict. This unique chance was not taken, and tragedy has broken out, bringing great bloodshed and devastating destruction for all involved.

Certain details of what was behind this event are now coming to light. As Marlin Fitwater, the White House press secretary noted, the date for commencing large-scale operations against Iraq, including ground operations, was determined by the U.S. President two weeks ago, immediately after Richard Cheney, U.S. Defence Secretary, and Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. Armed Forces, had returned from a trip to the positions of U.S. troops in the Gulf zone. The rest was up to General Schwarzkopf, who fixed the time, subsequently approved by the President, for starting the operation, intended, according to the plan of its authors, not to allow the enemy to avoid "just and deserved retribution."

Is this not the real reason why the concrete peace plan for a settlement put forward by the Soviet Union, and accepted by Iraq, was from the very start declared to be "insufficient" and then "unacceptable." Instead Baghdad was issued a rigid ultimatum backed up by an enormous military machine cranked up to the full.

There is already talk in Washington today of how long it will take to remove such a massive army of troops and equipment from the Gulf zone after the war. Were they seriously calculating that Iraq, deprived of an effective communications system, would be able to start evacuating its troops within the limited period stipulated by the ultimatum?

It is evident that the U.S. military, encouraged by the impunity with which they had waged the air war against Iraq, were simply itching for the moment when they would be given the chance to "put the squeeze on" the Iraqis and force them to surrender with all their weaponry to the mercy of their conquerors.

Furthermore, they were not the only ones clearly inclined to completely destroy the military and industrial potential of Iraq, along with its state structures, and to provide the United States and its allies with a privileged position in the postwar set-up. According to R. Whitney, a British Conservative member of Parliament, and G. Frost, director of the London Institute of European Defense and Strategic Studies, writing in the London SUNDAY TELEGRAPH today, only the leaders of the anti-Iraqi coalition "especially the United States and Great Britain" must "determine the conditions for peace" after the end of the war.

There is no doubt that the prospects for settling the crisis in the Persian Gulf and throughout the Near East region have been seriously complicated. As Gandhi, leader of the Indian national Congress (I) Party noted today as he stopped over in Moscow, the war in the Persian Gulf is causing serious anxiety for their security to countries such as India, since it looks as if the old system for international security is collapsing and nothing adequate to replace it has yet been found.

Commentaries, Reports View Soviet Peace Plan

Soviet Initiative Failure Viewed

LD2402223291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2111 GMT 24 Feb 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] There are many commentaries abroad today devoted to our country's position with regard to the war in the Gulf. At noon today a Soviet Government statement was published. It states fairly bluntly that the start of the ground war is the result of, as the statement put it, the instinct of the military solution beginning to work; that Iraq was already willing to leave Kuwait and that over one or two days it would have been possible to harmonize differences over the matter of formulas between Iraq and other countries. The USSR insists that the current situation be urgently examined at a sitting of the UN Security Council.

There was much confusion in the interpretation of the recent Soviet peace plan put forward a few days ago, which the United States has now clearly rejected. There are probably objective reasons for this: a lack of information about the Soviet initiatives. It is unclear why, while the United States, the USSR, and Iraq are, so to speak, adhering to the UN Security Council resolutions, America is rejecting Iraq's proposals and Iraq is no less vigorously rejecting America's proposals.

It seems to me that one of the most important issues here is the future of Saddam Husayn's regime. According to the Soviet proposals, Husayn would remain in power after the war. This would, or course, increase the stimulus for Baghdad to be more amiable. For the United States, it is obvious: Husayn's regime will not be acceptable in five or even 10 years. International observers believe that the aggression inherent in the ideology and outlook of the current leaders of Iraq means that the Baghdad regime will be a threat to its neighbors even in 10 years time.

PRAVDA Sees Plan as Settlement Basis

PM2202205191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Feb 91 First Edition p 5

["Editorial Commentary": "Settlement Plan Now Exists"]

[Text] It can now be said with some degree of optimism that a real plan for a peaceful settlement of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict exists. It meets the interests of the peoples and of security in the region and in the world in general.

The plan the Soviet Union has agreed with Iraq actually offers the prospect of a way out of a bloody and destructive war which is becoming increasingly terrifying in terms of its size and the weapons that are being used. It contains all the essential ingredients: a cease-fire, a timetable for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, an exchange of prisoners of war, UN monitoring of the implementation of the accords that have been reached. The ending of the war would save thousands and thousands of lives and save from grief and suffering the millions of people caught up in the gigantic bloodbath. To achieve this no effort can be too great.

At the same time, the proposed plan, which the Soviet Union, as mediator, put the maximum effort into devising, is not a manifestation of pacificism and it is not appeasement of an aggressor. It contains neither conditions nor stipulations. And it must be acknowledged that common sense and responsibility for the future have finally prevailed in Baghdad.

The liberation of Kuwait and the cessation of Iraqi aggression—this is the chief demand of the UN Security Council resolutions. It is their implementation that is ensured by the proposed political solution, so consequently a solid, realistic foundation has been laid for the attainment of peace.

This fact should prevent the proposed settlement plan from being rejected out of handk, although there is such an inclination. The logic of war has a will of its own. The ground offensive is ready. The gun is cocked. But it is not for the military to decide the course of events! Certainly not the U.S. military. After all, there are Arab countries' forces too in the allied coalition. What will, for example, Egypt or Syria say? Is it not time to silence the engine of the machine of destruction rather than let it run, now that there is talk of a peaceful settlement?

One of the motives of the opponents of a peaceful solution is the unquenched thirst for revenge. However, the UN Security Council resolutions do not give anyone a free hand to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and destroy the country. There is nothing about any "punishment." But Iraq has already been punished—cruelly punished. Its economic and industrial potential has been destroyed. There has been great loss of life. The suffering of Kuwait, which has been turned into one gigantic firing range, goes on and on. Must this suffering be prolonged when there is the chance of a way out of the crisis?

And another thing. Obviously, different countries will react differently to the proposed plan for a peace settlement. But it was the UN Security Council that authorized sanctions against Iraq. The Security Council alone has the final say in the approval of a settlement plan. It should assume full responsibility. And the world community has already demonstrated its potential and desire to resolve the most acute conflicts by civilized means.

TASS Comment on Settling Conflict

LD2302133991 Moscow TASS in English 1320 GMT 23 Feb 91

[By TASS news analyst Georgiy Vasilyev: "UN Role in Settling the Gulf Conflict—TASS Comment"]

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—At the moment when developments in the Gulf are approaching a critical point, important events have occurred in the political situation around the armed conflict. These events may exert a decisive influence on the prospect for halting the bloody war and normalsing the situation in the region.

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and the Revolution Command Council officially stated that they agree to withdraw all Iraqi troops from Kuwait unconditionally. Iraqi Foreign Minsiter Tariq 'Aziz's statements at today's news conference in Moscow are actually a response to U.S. President George Bush's statement regarding Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait.

Ending the dangerous armed conflict requires the adoption of several practical measures, of which the most important one would be the undelayed convocation of the U.N. Security Council to ensure the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and avoid new victims to the war that had already claimed thousands of lives.

One more important problem that calls for an urgent solution is to repair ecological damage that was caused to the region by military operations. U.S. and other Western media organisation accuse Iraq of being engaged in "ecological terrorism" by blowing up oil wells in Kuwait. It is reported that some 180 out of 590 oil wells in Kuwait were blown up.

Iraq rejects these accusations. It proposed sending a special observer of the U.N. Security Council to Kuwait for a first-hand-look at the situation and expressed readiness to help him.

Ending the war in the Gulf as soon as possible is dictated by common sense. It is obvious that in the conditions that have taken shape, the international community that pursues the establishment of peace in the region by political means can make an enormous contribution to these efforts.

'Difficult To Explain' Continuing War

LD2302191191 Moscow TASS in English 1849 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—After his telephone conversation with President Bush on Friday, President Gorbachev had telephone conversations with British Prime Minister John Major, chairman of the Italian Council of Minister Giulio Andreotti, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, French President Francois Mitterrand and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. Conversations with other leaders are also planned. They were postponed because of the lack of time or inability to contact them.

The main idea expressed by Gorbachev was that a new situation has been formed after the Iraqi leadership agreed to a full, unconditional and immediate withdrawal of its troops from Kuwait. This makes it possible to reach in the coming days the main target, which is contained in the mandate formulated in Security Council resolutions. It became possible thanks to the exceptional unity in the denunciation of the invasion, as well as the determination to stop it within the generally recognised framework of the prestige of the United Nations Organisation, that were displayed by most countries.

It would be impossible to achieve a peaceful solution today, if the forces, interested in the settlement of the conflict, did not act jointly during the past several months. It would be impossible without the first stage of the combat operations, without the U.S. taking upon itself its main burden. A new character of Soviet-U.S. relations and a dramatic change in the international situation in Europe played a very important part in approaching this goal.

As a result of all these factors a chance emerged to avoid the development of combat operations into a new stage with a tragic outcome. The efforts of the Soviet Union, which used its opportunities in relations with Iraq, created a possibility of stopping the war immediately. At a moment like this one it is unreasonable to pretend that nothing important has happened and continue to step up the war.

The difference between the plan accepted by the Iraqi leadership and the demands put forward by Washington is not really great. We cannot regard the items on which differences exist as a weighty reason for developing combat operations into a new even more destructive stage.

This is the concept that President Gorbachev set forth in a well substantiated way during his conversations with other leaders, hoping that it would be met with the understanding that was in evidence during the whole of the crisis in the course of contacts on various levels.

He expressed confidence that the meeting by Iraq of the main demand of the mandate of the Security Council would enable it to work out a new mandate in the same spirit of mutual understanding and high responsibility on the basis of all proposals, claims and a deep analysis of problems created by the war and the long conflict in that region. The session of the Security Council could begin immediately.

Anyway, in the new situation that emerged on February 22, 1991, it will be very difficult to explain to nations and the public, primarily to Arab countries, why the new chance was not used and the massive loss of life among soldiers and the Arab population were not prevented.

Plan Opens Path for 'Serious' Talk

LD2302005991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1215 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS political observer Askold Biryukov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—The situation surrounding the conflict in the Persian Gulf is continually changing, literally from one hour to the next. World public opinion had not had time to express its disappointment with yesterday's speech on Baghdad Radio by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn before the Iraqi leadership's agreement to accept the specific plan for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Gulf proposed by Mikhail Gorbachev to Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz last Monday. [passage omitted]

In the opinion of the correspondent of the Chinese RENMIN RIBAO in Washington, the "cool reaction" of the United States to the peace plan of the Soviet Union confirms the impression that has arisen in diplomatic and journalistic circles of the U.S. strategic plan in the Persian Gulf war. The United States intends to deal an extremely hard blow tp Iraq, he notes, and destroy the threat from Husayn. "The conditions put forward by the Soviet Union are not to their taste; they fear lest the USSR should get some advantage from this."

What "advantage" can there be here? The fact that the flames of war will stop raging on the threshold of the Soviet Union? That the sufferings of the Kuwaiti and Iraqi people will end? That no blood will flow in the sands of Arabia and the lives of tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of young Americans and British, Frenchmen and Arabs will not be destroyed? I cannot but agree with the American Jesse Jackson who sees in the report from Moscow "a ray of hope for saving thousands of lives." Is that not advantageous for the countries and peoples who have sent their sons to the war in the Gulf? [passage omitted]

Now some people are trying to put obstructions around the understandings reached in Moscow on the pretext that they do not provide for the payment of reparations and do not contain an economic boycott of Iraq. Who will pay compensation to the families of peaceable Iraqis who have died under the air strikes and missiles of the allies in the multinational forces? They do not bear the responsibility for the war in the Gulf, after all. Is it really necessary to punish with economic sanctions the Iraqi people who, even today, have not yet recovered from Iraq's eight-year war with Iran?

However this may be, the news from Moscow has opened up the path for serious discussions and responsible decisions. Whether it will be possible to use them to arrive at positive results and to settle the conflict in the Gulf by peaceful means before the voracious flames of war take hold of this region—that is with what the whole international community should now be concerned.

Radio Says Plan Encourages Optimism

LD2302055691 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Aleksey Zlatorunskiy commentary: "The Gulf: War or Peace"]

[Text] I think that the question of war and peace in the Gulf has not been raised by the international community since 2 August of last year, the date of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait, with the same extreme interest with which it is being raised these days.

It is now difficult to count all the initiatives, whether by some states and politicians or by the various international organizations, which aimed at stopping the war in the Gulf and bringing back justice there on the basis of the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

However, none of those steps stimulated such echoes and optimism as those stimulated by the latest Soviet plan for settling the crisis in the Gulf. The reasons, in my view, are many. Let us mention at least some of them.

First, the Soviet plan does not ignore the Security Council resolutions, but on the contrary, it brings back the course of events in the Gulf to the framework of these resolutions in particular. These resolutions aim at the liberation of Kuwait, the return of the status quo preceding 2 August 1990, and the non-punishment of Iraq by destroying its economic and military capability. However, the logic of military coperations which have begun in the Gulf regrettably justifies the supposition that the tendency toward that [Iraq's punishment] is becoming more and more evident. The proof is the increase in the number of casualties among Iraq's civilian residents and the destruction of residential districts, schools, and shops by the aircraft of the United States and its partners.

The fact that the question of liberating Kuwait has not moved from its still position for more than a month of intensive and fierce air raids on Iraq and its bombardment with missiles has also played a role. [During that period] the Iraqi Army has managed, even according to the estimation of U.S. experts, to retain, to a large degree, its fighting capability. Consequently, should the military operations continue, everything will be decided by ground battles. Even if we proceed from the premise that the Iraqi Army will inevitably be defeated, it is clear that blood will run like rivers from both sides. In light of this situation, the apperance of the Soviet plan, the drafting of which required a great deal of patience and political acumen, constitutes, of course, the last chance indeed to avoid military insanity, particularly after Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz, who had arrived in Moscow, expressed on behalf of his country's leadership agreement on the Soviet plan to settle the crisis in the Gulf.

However, stopping military operations and transferring the crisis to the arena of political discussions not only depends on the constructive spirit of the Soviet plan and the agreement of Iraq. It is necessary that the United States and the rest of the anti-Iraq alliance accept it. What can we say in this regard?

The United States, on whose position depend the decisions of many other countries—we cannot hide that—has in general welcomed the Soviet initiative, and its reaction to Baghdad's agreement to withdraw from Kuwait has been positive. However, it has generally rejected the plan as a guideline for tangible action, justifying that on the grounds that it is not satisfied with all that is in the Soviet plan. What in particular?

It is clear that discussions of this will take place in due course because the White House's official statement, which was read out by Marlin Fitwater, was very brief. France, Italy, Spain, and some other Western countries saw in the Soviet plan a realistic chance for stopping the bloodletting. The general reaction of the Arab world to the Soviet plan was positive. However, Israel could not hide its annoyance and resentment, and announced that a plan that does not stipulate the elimination of the Iraqi military machine should not be accepted.

How will events develop henceforth? We will find out in the next few days. However, the representatives of the Soviet leadership announced in a news conference today that the latest discussions with the Iraqi side encourage optimism. We hope that events will develop in this direction especially.

ISQA Program Discusses Peace Plan

LD2202135291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1130 GMT 22 Feb 91

[From the "International Situation—Questions and Answers" program, hosted by Kazbek Basiyev, with the participation of "colleagues" Igor Surguchev, Konstantin Patsyuk, and Sergey Pravdin, and Ruslan Gilyulin, correspondent in Pakistan]

[Text] [Basiyev] Greetings, comrades. The events in the Persian Gulf remain the main theme in letters from our listeners, and in the questions they ask by telephone. Many of you are worried by not only by the fact that the war in that region is causing death and destruction, but also that it could lead to totally unpredictable consequences in the future. There are questions of a different sort. Thus, for example, some of our listeners the already asking how the situation in the Persian Gulf will turn out after the end of the war.

[Begin recording] [Silvanovich] My name is Silvanovich. I am from Moscow. I would like to ask whether the Americans will leave the Persian Gulf after they finally defeat the Arabs. Who will chase them out—forgive me for the crude words—who will chase out the Americans after they occupy this region? This is nothing new. This will not be the first region of the world that they have occupied. [end recording]

[Basiyev] I will ask my colleague Igor Surguchev to reply to this question.

[Surguchev] In principle, after the end of the war in the Persian Gulf zone, the Americans should leave this region. In any event, if one is to believe the statements by President Bush and Secretary of State Baker, they will not remain there for any prolonged period. True, one can hear in the United States—and even from the mouths of official spokesmen of the administration—different opinions about this. So there is no total unanimity of opinion across the ocean about whether to withdraw the troops or whether to maintain a U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf zone.

But I think that one should be guided in this question by the publicly stated position of the top leaders of the U.S. Administration. Let me add that after the fulfillment of the mandate given to the multinational forces by the UN Security Council, all of these forces should leave the Gulf region. Neither the United States nor the other member countries of the anti-Iraq coalition, I believe, will simply have any juridical basis upon which to prolong the stay of their forces there.

But it is not possible now to say quite definitely that the Americans will depart immediately after the end of military operations. For we do not know at what stage or under what conditions the war gainst the Iraqi regime will end, or whether the regime itself will remain intact. What the post-war situation in the Middle East will be like, and whether Iraq's neighbors will feel completely safe, depend to a large extent on the replies to these questions.

If the Saddam Husayn regime remains in power, and still retains a sufficiently impressive military potential, then it cannot be ruled out that some countries in the region could ask the United States to keep U.S. forces on their territory. Such a turn of events is possible. The situation will be different if Iraq is completely defeated and capitulates. In my view this will predetermine the question of the further fate of Saddam Husayn as head of the Iraqi state.

In view of the fact that, as far as is known, Baghdad has given its agreement to the implementation of the peace plan of our country's President Gorbachev, then it seems to me that the first variant of the outcome of the war is more probable. The choice in favor of a peaceful political settlement finally made by Saddam Husayn makes it possible to halt military actions and prevent further bloodshed.

In my view, further bloodshed is senseless, as Iraq is prepared to withdraw its occupying troops from Kuwait. For the main aim of all the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council is to achieve the restoration of the freedom and independence of Kuwait and the return to the country of its legitimate government. The Soviet peace plan ensures the achievement of these aims—although, possibly, it is not ideal.

Its implementation is not to the liking of those in the West who wish not only to liberate Kuwait from the occupiers, but also to destroy as much as possible of Iraq's military-industrial infrastructure, and as far as possible lead things toward the overthrow of the current president of that country. Undoubtedly it is these rather influential forces who predetermined the initial, sharply negative reaction by the White House to the Soviet-Iraqi peace proposals.

In a number of other countries of the anti-Iraq coalition, there has been a more balanced and thoughtful reaction to them. It has been stated there that they require serious study. Therefore, an official U.S. spokesman subsequently let it be understood that that the administration intends to hold consultations with its allies. I think that its first reaction is not the final reply.

It must be said that the news from Moscow about Iraq's positive reaction to the Soviet initiative has been received with hope and approval in the United Nations. It is considered there that the multinational forces should adhere strictly to the mandate given to them by the Security Council. As is known, this mandate does not envisage the complete defeat of Iraq, and certainly not the overthrow of Saddam Husayn.

The future will show whether the UN mandate will be exceeded. But this, too, has a bearing on the question asked by our listener—and therefore, it is not possible to give an unamibiguous answer to it. In general, it is closely linked with the problem of the post-war peace settlement in the Middle East, which statesmen and politicians in various countries are already giving deep thought to. Without a doubt, it is the countries of this region, in the first instance, which should be the architects of a system of firm peace and security. But I think that they will not manage to resolve such a complicated task without the assistance of the whole world community. There are various ideas, opinions, and plans on this score. But without a doubt the independence of Kuwait should be restored. Iraq must remain a sovereign, territorially integral state. It is necessary to have a just, peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the situation in Lebanon. Of course, vast efforts and time will be required for this.

But first of all, it is necessary to stop the war in the Persian Gulf zone. That is now the main thing. Everyone should be interested in this.

NEW TIMES Views Saddam Husayn's Motives

PM2102164491 Moscow NEW TIMES in English 12-18 Feb 91 pp 14-17

[Leonid Vasilyev article: "What is Saddam Husayn Banking On?"]

[Text] The Husayn totalitarian regime has always regarded Israel as enemy No.1. The capture of Kuwait by Iraq, for all the enormous importance of this act for the latter country craving extra petrodollars, was not merely an offensive. It was a giant provocation of the kind largely connected with Arab-Israeli confrontation. If the West puts up with the annexation of Kuwait, well, praise be to Allah; if it doesn't, then let it pay for that by a pro-Arab settlement in Palestine. Iraq is not afraid of war. It makes no difference to Iraq whom it fights and when, and a war against the West (even if any Arab countries join it and take up the cudgels for Kuwait) will, in any case, end up as the Arabs' war against Israel. And then there will be no avoiding a definite answer to the question: Whose side are the Arabs?

Husayn warned the West in advance that a war with Iraq would mean an Arab war against Israel, and that Israel would be the first target.

It was such reasoning that prompted countries like Yemen, Libya and Jordan—not to mention bellicose Palestinians led by 'Arafat—as to whom to side with in the Gulf war. In accordance with Husayn's scenario, Israel's likely entry into the war (deliberately provoked by the shelling of Israeli cities) is to transform the civilized world's conflict with Iraq into an Arab conflict with Israel (the West).

One can understand those who take up the streets in protest against the Gulf war: people are tired of wars and want no more of them. They do not give much thought to the causes and the nature of the armed conflict. One can also understand the fanatical Muslims who call upon all the true believers to rally around the green banner of the holy Jihad.

Finally, it is easy to see why the leaders of most countries have backed the combat action against Iraq. They cannot appease the aggressor forever, and have been compelled to go to war. What's more, they will be compelled to carry the war through—not only to free Kuwait, but also to deprive Iraq of mass destruction weapons lest the Baghdad dictator should remain a threat to world peace. In their interpretation of the purposes of the Gulf war, the leaders of many countries have the sympathy and support of their parliaments. The situation in our country is somewhat different.

During the early stages of the conflict, observers noted the unprecedented fact that the Soviet Union, instead of opposing the West in the Middle East, showed awareness of the threat to world peace posed by the aggressor, and voiced its readiness to help bridle him, although Baghdad had been our ally until quite recently, and largely owes its military potential to our arms deliveries. Presently it turned out, however, that many influential forces in our country (the mighty military-industrial complex, above all) are displeased with such a policy.

One of the reasons for Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze tending his resignation was that his Middle East policy had come under heavy and harassing fire. The Foreign Minister was accused, for the umpteenth time, of "surrendering to the West" and leaving our erstwhile friend, Saddam Husayn, in the lurch. Those attacks could be dismissed as echoes of the past and ignored. Against the background of our policy's overall trend to the Right, the accusations in question took on a new quality and did not only hurt Shevardnadze, who discerned in them, with good reason, the indications of imminent dictatorship, but had an effect on Moscow's stand.

The policy of manoeuvring ensued. Now Moscow qualifies its support for the West in the Gulf war by ever increasing reservations which amount not so much to pressing for a peaceful settlement of the conflict (which, as any sober-minded politician can see, is out of the question under the circumstances) as to sending a signal to the Arab world and to our own Right that our country does not, and will not, have anything to do with the war. As soon as hostilities broke out Moscow issued a call for ceasefire, a call that had a humanitarian ring to it. The same can be said of the Soviet President's explanation regarding his moves on that fateful night, when he learned from President Bush that the war was just minutes away. Yet under the circumstances, the demands to end the war immediately may mean the continuing occupation of Kuwait.

True, two weeks after the outbreak of the war Bessmertnykh and Baker pointed out at their special meeting, on behalf of their respective governments, that the war could be stopped as soon as Husayn started withdrawing his troops from occupied Kuwait. In other words, the demand for an immediate (unconditional?) end to hostilities was dropped. Nevertheless the impression is that sympathetic neturality towards the aggressor is getting ever more pronounced in Soviet foreign policy. It is worth paying attention to the key in which the developments in the Gulf are presented by our government media—I mean Central Television, above all. On our TV screens we see scenes of protest demonstrations galore, but very few serious analyses, if any. The viewers may easily get the impression that the Americans have got themselves involved in another Vietnam against their own and other nations' will.

Fortunately, the attempts to inculcate this stereotype in the minds of the public have been thwarted by Iraq itself which defied the whole of mankind. The release of millions of barrels of oil into the Persian Gulf, which resulted in an enormous slick killing all local sea life and threatening to put the seawater distilling plants out of action, goes to show that iraq is deliberately provoking the world under the motto "If I suffer, others will suffer still more". His repeated threats to use mass destruction weapons in the war follow the same logic, although Husayn cannot possibly fail to realize that if non-conventional weapons are brought into play against a small country like Iraq, no one at all will survive there.

What is Husayn banking on? Why is he so confident of the massive support of an overwhelming majority of his people who enthusiastically respond to his calls? There are two basic factors behind Iraq's - or rather its leaders - behaviour. The first is Islam, at its most fundamentalist. Islamic fundamentalism manifested itself a decade ago when the leaders of the victorious revolution in Iran, Shiite Ayatollas headed by Khomeyni proved ready, not so much to die for the cause of Islam, as to defy the whole of the non-Islamic world, and even the non-fundamentalist Islamic world.

Islamic fundamentalism is by no means simple and harmless. It is a militantly aggressive movement similar to Jihad. This is a reaction to the East lagging behind the capitalist West, an attempt to interfere with those who would like to fill the gap between West and East. Fundamentalism believes its greatest mission to be to defy the Western challenge and use Islam's religious and cultural tenets to unite all Muslims. Today a warlike Sunnite Iraq has taken over from Shiite Iran as the stronghold of Islamic fundamentalism; this has been an important factor in enhancing Iraq's prestige both among Arab countries and among Muslims the world over.

Those who have challenged the infidels and are prepared to die in a holy war against them stand high in Allah's favour. This fundamentalist Islamic idea is rapidly gaining ground in Iraq and in the rest of the Muslim world. Tens of thousands of young men in various Islamic countries, including some Soviet Republics, are prepared to volunteer to the Iraqi army any time. It is a firm commitment to Islamic fundamentalism that accounts for Husayn's charismatic appeal to Iraqis, Arabs at large and to many people in the rest of the Musliim world, including Iran, which has been at war with Iraq quite recently but which is now most sympathetic to the challenge Iraq has flung to the world - especially to the West, so hateful to Iran's aytollas. This probably explains the mysterious evacuation of Iraq's 100 best combat planes to Iran in an attempt to save the flower of the Iraqi air force from destruction. Another reason why Iraq is putting on a bold front in the Gulf war lies in its preparedness to turn the war into a holocaust beyond the West's powers of endurance. This is another manifestation of the difference in the belligerents' religious and psychological points of departure. For a Muslim, self-sacrifice in the cause of Jihad is his duty to Allah (incidentally, the holy war dead are guaranteed a ticket to paradise); hence the readiness to sacrifice millions of lives. No one has dared to reproach Husayn for the 500,000 lives claimed in the Iran-Iraq war. So who would dare to reproach him for the millions who will die in the war against the infidels? Therefore, Husayn is free to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers. If he runs out of manpower of his own, volunteers from other countries will step in. Can President Bush afford anything of this kind? Of course he can't. Even if the proportion of American casualties to Iraq's is one in ten, American public opinion will hardly put up with the White House carrying the war on for too long.

Husayn is obviously prepared to pursue this murderous strategy, welcoming the prospect of the death toll running into tens and hundreds of thousands playing right into his hands. He is eager to start a ground war as indicated by the provocative raids on the territory of Saudi Arabia.

East Europe

Visegrad Summit Meeting's Aims Viewed

PM2202155791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Feb 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent F. Lukyanov report: "'Triple Alliance' in Eastern Europe?"]

[Text] Budapest—After being repeatedly postponed, a summit meeting of three East European neighbor countries—Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary—began on Friday in the small historical Hungarian town of Visegrad, situated on the banks of the Danube.

Judging by the statements of the sides' representatives, the "triumvirate" is to sign a joint declaration on cooperation that will introduce amendments on several points, including the Warsaw Pact's military organization, in view of the changes that have taken place in recent weeks. On the eve of the Visegrad meeting, the Czechoslovak, Polish, and Hungarian leaders—V. Havel, L. Walesa, and J. Antall, who have repeatedly spoken out in favor of the rapid disbandment of the Warsaw Pact military organization—received a message from USSR President M.S. Gorbachev proposing the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact military organization, which has fulfilled its historic role, by 1 April 1991. The Soviet president also proposed holding a meeting of representatives of the Warsaw Pact member states at foreign and defense minister level in the near future in order to reach a final decision on the question of the alliance's military organization. As far as its political organization is concerned, the Soviet leadership proposes that this question be discussed later, at a summit meeting.

Judging by press reports in the three countries concerned, the reaction of the "triumvirate" to the Soviet proposal is favorable. Hungary has proposed holding a meeting of Warsaw Pact foreign and defense ministers in Budapest 25 February, and it seems this is what will happen.

It is well known that, as a result of this meeting of the "triumvirate" on the Danube and its plans to sign a declaration of cooperation, all kinds of assumptions are being made about the nature and direction of this cooperation. Some have been heard to express the opinion that the "triumvirate" is virtually creating a new pact in place of the Warsaw Pact—an exclusive bloc to oppose Moscow and an alliance that would be the first step not only toward joining the EEC but also toward joining NATO. It is being pointed out that Hungary, for example, is already an associate member of the North Atlantic Assembly and that similar intentions are making themselves felt in Prague and Warsaw.

On the eve of the Visegrad meeting, politicians in all three countries made repeated attempts to dispel these ideas. J. Hermann, a spokesman for the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, recently said that the "triumvirate's" cooperation is open in nature and not directed against anybody. Polish President L. Walesa spoke in more detail about the nature of cooperation between the three countries in a recent interview with the newspaper NEPSZABADSAG.

"All three countries," the Polish president said, "have left one and the same system behind them and now they want to become part of Europe. Despite this, however, our countries are different from one another and each is following its own path. In this respect, we are closer to one another than to Western countries. By cooperating—and we are doomed to cooperate—we will make our way into Europe more quickly and less painfully. We are leaving a bloc that had been forced on us and would not want to fall into another extreme," the Polish president stressed. "We would not want to act against anyone... We must do everything possible to preserve our freedom and not fall out with other countries. We are not preparing a political pact, but we must guarantee the preservation of the values that link us together—values that we all will defend and will support one another in defending. We cannot, after all, pose a threat either to Germany or to the Soviet Union."

Answering a question about the possibility of Poland joining NATO, L. Walesa said that there will be no place for military blocs in the future, as Europe is opening rather than closing its doors and disbanding blocs rather than creating them. Czechoslovak President V. Havel expressed himself in a similar vein on the eve of the talks, although he did point out the importance of preserving the Warsaw Pact political organization in the immediate future, because otherwise NATO would simply "lose its partner" at the current arms reduction talks, "and this would hamper the talks." In short, the leaders of the "triumvirate" are placing emphasis primarily on political and economic cooperation at the moment, although observers believe that the possibility of closer military cooperation between the three countries should not be ruled out in the future.

It is interesting that this meeting in Visegrad should have a kind of precedent: In November 1335, at the initiative of Hungarian King Charles Robert, the rulers of Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary met here, in Visegrad, to hold talks and agree on close cooperation in trade. As we can see, there is a long-standing tradition of collaboration between these three countries, so the choice of Visegrad as the location for this latest summit meeting is apparently no coincidence.

West Europe

Premier Pavlov Receives German Bank Official

LD2202222491 Moscow TASS in English 2159 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 23 TASS—Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov Friday met visiting German financier Friedrich Wilhelm Christians, chairman of the Deutsche Bank A.G. Supervising Board.

During a circumstantial exchange of views on Soviet-German economic and social relations, both sides expressed interest in the development of cooperation in these fields.

Christians pointed to some factors hampering cooperation and said that the Soviet Union's serious partners in the West did not seek to put up barriers where cooperation was needed. Both sides, he said, should look for and find sensible ways of interaction in spite of current difficulties.

Pavlov noted that he did not call into question good relations with foreign partners of the Soviet Union which took shape over recent years. Along with that, he said, it is impossible to ignore the growth of speculative activity by shadowy dealers who use the Soviet ruble in concluding unlawful foreign economic deals. He said a comparison with international narco-business involuntarily came to mind in such cases, as no country was guaranteed against it, no matter how strong its law and order.

The prime minister stressed that the Soviet Union had no intention to change its foreign economic policy. It favours the active development of business relations with industrialists, traders and financiers in other countries and an organic integration of the Soviet into the world economy. This applies fully to Soviet-German relations, based on the treaties and agreements the two countries signed last autumn.

On Thursday, Christians and a group of other representatives of the Deutsche Bank A.G. met Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev.

The Russian side expressed the desire to consider the possibility of inviting a major German specialist in international financial and commercial activity as a counsellor to the Russian Government.

Bessmertnykh Interviewed Before Madrid Visit

PM2202124591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Feb 91 Union Edition p 5

[TASS report: "Arrival in Madrid"]

[Text] USSR Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh has arrived in Madrid where he will take part in the special session of the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe. Representatives of countries which do not belong to that organization have been invited to it. Before departing Moscow, the minister gave an interview to a TASS diplomatic correspondent at the airport.

My visit, he said, is pursuing a dual purpose. First of all there is participation in the Council of Europe session. I intend to hear my counterparts and voice my own ideas about the prospects for the development of the international situation in the context of the Council of Europe session. A number of meetings are planned with the ministers of other countries.

Our aim, the leader of the Soviet foreign policy department continued, is to develop relations with the Council of Europe as a very authoritative and important organization representing the majority of the continent's countries which in scope essentially is beginning to come close to being all-European. The USSR is proceeding in the direction of becoming a Council of Europe member.

The second, no less important, aim of the trip is to have talks with the Spanish foreign minister and head of government on questions of the further development of bilateral relations. A meeting with the country's king is also planned. Soviet-Spanish relations are now at a very high level, especially since the USSR president's visit to Spain, the minister stressed. Our task is to reinforce positive trends, expand contacts, and make them stabler and broader. I have a corresponding instruction from M.S. Gorbachev and a message from him to Spanish Prime Minister F. Gonzalez, he said.

Supreme Soviet

Gorbachev Nominates Candidates for Ministries

LD2502105591 Moscow TASS in English 1043 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

Moscow February 25 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev today submitted a list of 23 candidates to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The parliament began forming the cabinet in January, confirming the appointment of Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and four deputy prime ministers.

The president nominated Lev Ryabev, Fedor Senko, and Vladimir Shcherbakov as another three deputy prime ministers. He proposed Dmitriy Yazov as defence minister, Vladimir Orlov as finance minister, and Vladimir Kryuchkov as KGB State Security Committee Chairman.

The parliament is expected to decide on the issue within the next few days.

Republic Decision on Referendum Declared Invalid

LD2502154191 Moscow TASS in English 1521 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspodent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow February 25 TASS—The Soviet parliament today declared as invalid republican bodies' decisions which block the holding of the March 17 referendum on the future of the Soviet Union.

Decisions to hold the referendum have not yet been taken in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, and Estonia, Vladimir Orlov, chairman of the USSR Central Commission for the Referendum, told the parliament session.

The parliament-adopted resolution suggests that republican state power bodies "immediately take measures to set up commissions for the country-wide referendum and remove all obstacles preventing citizens from exercising their right to participate in the country-wide polling".

The parliament resolved that the independence polls taken among the population in some republics "are not a legal ground for non-holding of the Union-wide referendum because they have not provided an answer to the main question brought up for discussion and voting by all Soviet people" (The question brought up for the referendum reads: "Do you consider it necessary to keep the USSR as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of people of any nationality will be fully guaranteed?")

The USSR Supreme Soviet has also granted the "right to local councils in those republics where central republican commissions for the country-wide referendum have not been set up up to now, to form polling stations and districts and approve area and district referendum commissions.

Similar rights have been granted to the work collectives and public associations at enterprises and institutions as well as military units.

People will thus be able to participate in the referendum irrespective of the attitude of republican authorities.

Committees Discuss Warsaw Pact Reform 22 Feb

LD2202214991 Moscow TASS in English 2047 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The Soviet parliament's international affairs and defence and state security committees today held a joint meeting to discuss reforming the Warsaw Treaty.

The committees heard a report on the extraordinary meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee.

Foreign and domestic political problems emerging in connection with curtailing the Warsaw Treaty's military structure, were discussed with account of the need to ensure the Soviet Union's state interests and inviolability of its western borders.

Speakers noted the Warsaw Treaty's positive role during the "cold war", when it was a reliable guarantor of the security of the Soviet Union and its allies. Deputies supported the government's intention to transform the role of the treaty in the current, qualitatively new, conditions in building partner relations between the East and West.

Participants noted that this transformation should help lessen military opposition in Europe and switch from bloc to non-bloc security structures on the continent within the framework of the all-European process.

At the same time, they expressed concern over the fact that the West has so far failed to take adequate practical measures to transform NATO into a political, rather than military-political, union.

They noted the need to retain and develop good-neighbourly, friendly and equal relations between the Soviet Union and other East European states on the new basis and with due account of historic mutual interdependence of their political destinies.

Dzasokhov on Pact's Dissolution

LD2302100491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent V. Stepanuk, including recorded remarks by Aleksandr Dzasokhov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee, in Moscow on 22 February; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs and Defense and State Security Committees today discussed problems connected with the reform of the Warsaw Pact.

[Stepanyuk] It is proposed that a decision be adopted on reducing the structure of this military organization at an extraordinary session of the political consultative committee of the state participants of the Warsaw Pact, which will be conducted at the foreign and defense ministerial levels next week in Budapest. The legislators have received detailed information on the coming meeting, and on the results of the work of the temporary commission of governmental plenipotentiaries on the transformation of the Warsaw Pact. In their parting words to the statesmen who will go to Budapest, the people's deputies expressed support for our government's line in transforming the role of this pact under today's principally new conditions of establishing relations at partners between the East and West, and also in maintaining and developing our general cooperation with the countries of East Europe.

[Dzasokhov] Moreover, we must with new strength emphasize today our firm will to find under the new conditions a renewal of the specific volumes of economic, trade, and scientific and technical cooperation, and within the limits that correspond to the interests of both our country and the Eastern Europe group of countries—in military cooperation as well.

I think that from today's session, and also from the podium of the Supreme Soviet, the European Community and the United States must also feel our invariable desire to see adequate conduct—also in NATO countries' circles. For the unilateral reconstruction of one of the military-political unions, and the completely static condition of the other military-political union, will of course always leave us with a most serious problem, which both politicians and diplomats will have to work on.

Interregional Group Statement on South Ossetia

PM2202144191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[Statement by Interregional Deputies' Group: "On Interethnic Conflicts in Transcaucasus Republics"]

[Text] "The measures which are being taken by the central and republican authorities to prevent the tragic development of events in Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent rayons and in South Ossetia have so far failed to bring peace, calm, and security to the inhabitants of these regions. Inalienable human rights are being violated, blood continues to be shed, people are dying, and children, women, and old men are suffering from cold and hunger.

"The Interregional Deputies Group urges the warring sides in each of these regions immediately to declare a moratorium on armed actions. The Interregional Group of Deputies suggests to the leadership of the USSR and the Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, to representatives of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent rayons and of South Ossetia, and to the people's deputies of the USSR and the republics that they correspondingly enter into talks with a view to the political solution of these tragic conflicts, that they ensure the rapid delivery of food and medical supplies to the regions acutely in need of them, and that they render assistance to the sick and wounded.

"The Interregional Deputies' Group expresses the readiness to be an intermediary in organizing meetings and talks.

"Adopted at a general meeting of the Interregional Deputies' Group 17 February 1991."

Deputy Explains Stance

PM2202141?91 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[Appeal from USSR People's Deputy S.M. Ryabchenko: "Position of Interregional Deputies' Group"]

[Text] The tragic events in South Ossetia are causing pain and anger among all honest people of our country and among the international community.

No references to history can justify the idea of the national supremacy of some peoples over others. There is not and cannot be any justification for bloodshed.

It is increasingly clear that under the cover of slogans appealing to the national feelings of Georgians and Ossetians, actions are being launched by criminals who are ready, for the sake of attaining their own selfish aims, to disregard the interests of both Ossetian and Georgian citizens and by "politicians" devoted to civil war methods.

The most tragic thing is that the demagogic slogans have misled many people in the zone of the conflict. Among those who are blocking the supply of food and medical supplies, switching off the electricity, and driving people of a different nationality from their homes there are those who sincerely believe they are defending something paid for by the struggle and blood of many generations of their own people, of their own nationality.

I do not doubt that these people will understand the erroneousness of their position, but they will understand it later.

And I would not have turned to the IZVESTIYA editorial office had I not recently encountered people standing outside the "Moskva" hotel with placards urging deputies to help normalize the situation in South Ossetia and if they had not, through someone's malicious intent, been misinformed about the position of the Interregional Deputies' Group.

I do not want to speculate as to who decided to sow lies, not hesitating to exploit people's grief and despair, to achieve their own ends in setting the general political positions of different parliamentary groups against each other. I shall merely note that this has proved possible only thanks to the lack of sufficiently full information on television and in the central press on the positions of deputies' groups and the course of debates in the Supreme Soviet.

In connection with the above I ask IZVESTIYA to publish the statement of the Interregional Deputies' Group.

I hope that not only the people with placards outside the hotel but also everyone in our country will understand that only the unity of democratic forces, only a consistent struggle for human rights, which is the basic principle of the Interregional Deputies' Group, can lead our country out of the dangerous period of interethnic conflicts flaring up now here, now there.

With respect, USSR People's Deputy S.M. Ryabchenko

Alksnis' Call for Change in Status Rejected

PM2202144791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Unattributed article: "Appropriate to Recall Status of IZVESTIYA: On a Speech by Deputy V. Alksnis"]

[Text] Addressing the USSR Supreme Soviet session on 18 February on a question on the agenda, Deputy V. Alksnis proposed among other things examining the question of the status of IZVESTIYA. Here is the stenographic report of his speech:

"In our view this session should examine the question of IZVESTIYA. The real situation is that unfortunately our parliament has no press organ of its own. The legislatures of all the union republics, as you know, have press organs. We, the supreme body of state power in the country, do not even though the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium is the founder of IZVESTIYA. As the saying goes, he who pays the piper calls the tune. But unfortunately, as you know, we cannot 'call the tune.'

"Therefore I propose that the IZVESTIYA question be put on the agenda. Perhaps it is possible to expand the editorial collegium and include representatives of all deputies' groups there so that they can influence the paper's line."

On 19 February V. Alksnis again demanded that the IZVESTIYA question be included on the agenda.

The proposal that the USSR Supreme Soviet should have its own press organ on the grounds that the Union republic legislatures have such organs deserves the most serious attention and, if the union legislature is considering creating its own newspaper or weekly, IZVESTIYA is ready to give every assistance. But the transformation of IZVESTIYA itself into such an organ would require a change in the status of a newspaper that has existed for over 70 years. The point is that IZVESTIYA is not and has never been the organ of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The newspaper's full title, which is printed on page 1 every day, is "IZVESTIYA SOVETOV NARODNYKH DEPUTATOV SSR," [News of the Soviets of People's Deputies of the USSR] in other words, our country's soviets at all levels. And as for the representation in the paper's leadership of people whose interests we represent, the more than 50,000 soviets at all levels in the country could theoretically lay claim to representation in the editorial collegium. It is not hard to imagine what the viability of such a management organ would be like.

Incidentally, the idea of introducing representatives of different social strata into the IZVESTIYA editorial collegium has been raised at various times, but the idea proved impracticable because in addition to the very concept of "representation" there is also the concept of "professionalism," which one would think is well known to the military, too. After all, the staff of a military combined unit or army does not include representatives of the villages, collective farms, schools, or social organizations on whose territory a combined unit is stationed. And how is the ordinary civilian taxpayer represented in the Army's leadership?

Special mention should be made of those who foot the bill. We hope that when Deputy Alksnis talks about the possibility or impossibility of "calling the tune" he knows that the founder—the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium—does not contribute money to the upkeep of IZVESTIYA. Furthermore, in the past 5 years—1986 through 1990—the IZVESTIYA publishing house has paid the state budget R132.6 million in free residual profit. And even given the present sharp rise in the cost of paper, publishing, and other services, IZVESTIYA and its supplements fully recoup the money spent on their upkeep.

Supreme Soviet Resolution on Price Reforms

PM2202134991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 1

[Resolution signed by A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, in the Kremlin in Moscow, on 19 February: "USSR Supreme Soviet Resolution: On the USSR Cabinet of Ministers Report on Measures Aimed at Stabilizing the Consumer Market, Implementing a Price Policy, and Ensuring the Population's Social Protection"]

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet resolves:

1. Note is to be taken of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers report on measures aimed at stabilizing the consumer market, implementing a price policy, and ensuring the population's social protection in accordance with the

decisions of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet.

2. The USSR Government is instructed to ensure mandatory backup for the measures being taken by giving priority to the implementation of compensatory measures and increased social protection for citizens with due regard for the remarks and suggestions made by USSR people's deputies.

3. When implementing comprehensive measures for the population's social protection, it is necessary to proceed from unconditional compliance with USSR citizens' constitutional rights to labor and fair remuneration, their equality before the laws, and equal rights for citizens of all republics.

The country's population is to be compensated in accordance with uniform principles for the additional expenditure occasioned by the change in retail prices.

[Signed] A. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet.
Moscow, The Kremlin. 19 February 1991.

Pavlov Cited on Prices, Bessmertnykh on Gulf

PM2202155191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[IZVESTIYA legislative correspondents A. Stepovoy and S. Chugayev report on 19 February USSR Supreme Soviet proceedings: "Prices and Compensation"]

[Text] Prime Minister V. Pavlov had a day to consider the questions put to him by deputies following his report on the planned measures aimed at further stabilizing the consumer market and implementing a prices policy. It must be admitted that there were plenty of questions (this was eloquently demonstrated by the impressive size of the sheaf of letters the premier was holding). He spent almost 90 minutes answering them at the chambers' 19 February plenary session. We will highlight the most important questions concerning the interests of the broad strata of the population.

[IZVESTIYA] What will be the mechanism for monitoring the utilization of fixed state prices and ceilings?

[Pavlov] At the decision of the Supreme Soviet we have set up a system of price control organs both centrally and locally. One of the system's main tasks is to monitor the correct application of state fixed prices and ceilings.

[IZVESTIYA] How will the funds obtained from the price rises be distributed between the budgets at various levels?

[Pavlov] We cannot say at this stage just how the funds will be distributed, since this will require work with the republics, krays, and oblasts.

[IZVESTIYA] Will the 60 rubles [R] of compensation be taxable when they are included in people's wages?

[Pavlov] It is proposed that compensation, like all other payments to the population, will be included in people's wages. But to prevent them being clawed back in tax, we envisage reviewing income tax scales, raising the tax-free allowance to R160 and correspondingly lowering the progression.

[IZVESTIYA] Are there any guarantees that goods and products will appear in the stores as a result of these measures, and how will this happen?

[Pavlov] This is a fundamental question. There could be various approaches in this area. One of them is the "shock therapy" option, whereby stores can be filled with goods since they will be inaccessible to the bulk of the population. Nonetheless, we have chosen another route—a range of measures which will make it possible to conduct the process in a controlled way, correlating the dynamics of price changes with measures to boost production.

We also expect rapid results from the reform, since it will resolve a vitally important problem for enterprises by making consumer goods production profitable and bringing the correlation between retail, wholesale, and purchase prices into line. Panic-buying [azhiotazhnyy] demand and the movement of goods from stores to apartments will be stopped. That is why for a certain period demand will dip below normal levels—because people will start using up their accumulated stocks.

[IZVESTIYA] What measures will the government be taking to regulate so-called "contract prices" for foodstuffs which are not on the list you have cited? The Supreme Soviet has not yet ratified this decision, but prices are rising every day and there has been no compensation...

[Pavlov] A decision has been made which will allow us to use noncentralized resources to supply the populations of large industrial centers. It will be possible to sell everything that the population buys—above-plan production by kolkhozes [collective farms], sovkhozes [state farms], and cooperatives—for contract prices. Unfortunately, the stores sell both state output and output drawn from noncentralized resources more or less equally. There is a kind of race or competition under way to apply contract prices. I think that, once price levels have been revised, this question should be normalized, since selling goods from state resources for so-called contract prices is a direct violation of the existing pricing system.

[IZVESTIYA] From what resources is it planned to seek funds to provide compensation in the population's wage packets when prices rise?

[Pavlov] The sources of compensation will be, above all, the subsidies which are currently being allocated to cover losses from production and output sales. Moreover, there are the additional earnings generated by raising retail prices above existing levels.

[IZVESTIYA] When is it planned to increase rail, air, and motor transport passenger fares, and to what extent?

[Pavlov] The new rail fares will show an increase of 70 percent on average, with the corresponding figures being 80 percent for air fares and 140 percent for sea fares. As for motor and river transport, as well as transport within cities, these are the province of the union republics. The decision on these kinds of transport will be made by the republics themselves, or by city, oblast, and kray soviets acting on their instructions.

We envisage a system of protective measures connected with the features of transport services for a whole string of population categories—for those working in the North and Far East, for instance, where local air services are the only form of travel. All price rises in shipment charges have been included to the tune of 100 percent in the compensation calculations.

[IZVESTIYA] Following the price reform, will the prices of food sold to urban populations by the state trading system and to rural populations by consumer cooperatives be identical?

[Pavlov] According to our calculations, prices of goods sold in the state and cooperative trading systems will converge. Before this year beef cost R3.80 in the consumer cooperative system, and R1.80 in the state trading system—an approximately twofold price difference. These are the prices which the population pays for its goods. That is why a redistribution of income between certain population groups is under way.

The price rises for this area of trade turnover will undoubtedly prompt price growth in the consumer cooperative system, but to a considerably smaller extent than will be the case in the state trading system.

[IZVESTIYA] What is the makeup of the basket of consumer goods? When will it be enshrined in law?

[Pavlov] The minimum consumer budget includes approximately 300 types of goods and services. They are all pooled in three enlarged consumer baskets of foodstuffs, nonfood goods, and services. In particular, the consumer basket for foodstuffs includes meat, meat products, milk, dairy products, eggs, fish, fish products, potatoes, vegetables, melon crops, fruit, berries, bread products, vegetable oil, margarine, sugar, and confectionery.

The minimum consumer budget is a most important element in the system of social protection for the population. That is why it is planned to enshrine in law its structure, makeup, and the principles of its application in economic management practice through a presidential decree on the general principles for determining the minimum consumer budget, which we have drawn up and agreed in principle at the Federation Council.

[IZVESTIYA] Why will wage increases amount to only R60 and provide compensation for just 85 percent of the retail price rises?

[Pavlov] I was bearing in mind the fact that in the national economy as a whole the average wage is not R300, as deputies have been saying, but around R270. Average price growth depends on the consumer basket, which is based on consumption by the families of workers, kolkhoz members, and employees respectively. Moreover, we take account of the fact that average wages differ markedly in different national economic sectors. We think that costs should be calculated not per individual worker but per family. According to the figures for 1990, average income per family member was R160. And around R50—or roughly one-third of family spending—is the statistic for per capita spending on food.

We reckoned the ordinary family to be made up of father, mother, two children, and an old person. In calculating compensation payments we considered that the father will earn R60 over and above his current wages—perhaps more, but not less. The mother, if she is looking after a child of up to to 18 months, will receive benefit payments of R110, or R80 for the first and second children up to the age of five. Moreover, the family will have to be paid targeted compensation in connection with the rise in the price of children's clothes, footwear, and other goods. We have planned to allocate R19 billion for these purposes. The family will receive R33-35 a month in targeted subsidies for two children. We propose making the payments quarterly or half-yearly. The pension to one of the parents should be increased by R65. In total, by our calculations, this family will receive an additional R250 a month, compared with the current amount of R140-150 spent on food by the statistically average family. Thus, the compensation paid to this family will clearly exceed any losses incurred through price rises.

The policy which we have laid down regarding prices and compensation is to consciously give priority to the least-protected strata of the population. Workers should be given not only compensation but a chance to earn money.

[IZVESTIYA] Will the wage rates currently in force be taken into account in the size of the proposed compensation payments?

[Pavlov] Yes, in regions and areas where wage supplements are payable for severe natural and climatic conditions, along with increased grants in line with the resolution we have proposed, pensions and benefits will be paid taking account of the rates payable to workers in nonproduction sectors.

[IZVESTIYA] What about grain, flour, macaroni, and vermicelli? After all, the norms set for their monthly distribution are a mockery... And this is after the good grain harvest of 1990!

[Pavlov] Last year we had one of our biggest harvests: We laid in 218 million tonnes. At the same time, state resources received 66.8 million tonnes of grain last year, which is 18 million tonnes less than the state order.

This means that the answer to the question of where the grain has gone is clear: It has stayed with the producers, while the concern about supplying the population is the state's problem. Today grain has been turned into a currency, and it is being used as a means of exerting pressure and a means of trade.

[IZVESTIYA] When will supplies to the population of even basic foodstuffs be stabilized? Why are today's coupons for miserable stocks of food virtually unspendable?

[Pavlov] The Union Government never shared and does not share the view that coupons should be introduced, let alone accept the need for guarantees that they will be spendable. The answer lies not in coupons but in increasing production of goods and observing shipment and procurement discipline. But this discipline is being undermined everywhere. In the main it is shipments between republics which are being disrupted.

[IZVESTIYA] How and by whose authority has the five-percent sales tax introduced by presidential decree been turned into a purchase tax? There have been five-percent increases in the retail prices of most industrial goods, foodstuffs, gasoline, air and rail tickets, and so forth...

[Pavlov] All over the world sales taxes are always included in the purchase price and, naturally, it is paid by the consumer of the product in question. That is the international practice. [Pavlov ends]

We will not rush into any commentary on the prime minister's various answers. We would merely note that our future life will not be peaceful and carefree. Understandably, the new cabinet cannot offer us any miracle cures.

All of us, individually and jointly, will have to get rid of the mentality of being residents of a socialist almshouse in which people can take it easy but still demand top whack for themselves. But while eradicating that idea, we would like our new government to adhere to the clear-cut principle of not hitting the earnings of those who are willing and able to work hard and well.

The evening sitting of the session started with congratulations. At the suggestion of Deputy A. Korenev, the sitting participants sent congratulations to the TRUD collective to mark the 70th anniversary of that popular publication. "The press helps us in our work," A. Lukyanov noted on this score, "even though we criticize it and it criticizes us."

The deputies then continued discussing the prime minister's report. In fact, no discussion as such had been planned. Speaking first, Deputy Yu. Komarov reminded the sitting participants that last May the country's Supreme Soviet had failed to adopt a similar plan proposed by the USSR Council of Ministers. In the deputy's opinion, this had led to a deterioration in the state of affairs as regards the supply of goods to the population, an interregional price war, and the emergence of local-level customs barriers. The proposal was made that we should not miss out this time but should adopt the government proposals as they stand. Amendments could then be made, if necessary, as work proceeds.

The proposal had its supporters and its opponents. The latter mainly pointed to the need for more thorough work to be done on the compensation measures proposed by the government. For their part their opponents stated that, if the government is assuming full responsibility for its policy, it should be allowed to act as it sees fit.

Nonetheless, Deputy A. Sobchak expressed the view that it would be a political and economic mistake to simply adopt the government proposals without a detailed discussion. In particular, the deputy voiced doubt about the principle proposed by V. Pavlov in his report that social protection will be determined by including supplements in wages, pay scales, and tariff rates. This question, A. Sobchak reported, has been discussed by the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Federation Council, resulting in categorical objections to such an approach. Because this is not so much compensation as a question of making working people endure a price rise. The inclusion of supplements in wages will lead to an increase in the prime cost of output. This, in turn, will make enterprises raise prices for the goods they produce. As a result, working people will be paying for their compensation out of their own pockets.

In his brief closing speech the Soviet prime minister dwelt on the question of collaboration between the center and the republics in implementing social protection measures. This question, the speaker stressed, is absolutely fundamental. It is causing dissension which has split republics.

At the end of the discussion the sitting participants adopted a resolution noting the Soviet prime minister's speech. It instructs the government, when implementing retail price reform, to back up the reform as far as possible with social protection measures for the population.

The deputies then turned to the Gulf situation.

As was to be expected, Soviet Foreign Minister A. Bessmertnykh's report gave rise to many questions. These mainly covered the possibility that the multinational forces will exceed the UN mandate, the linkage of a solution to the Kuwait crisis to a resolution of the Palestinian problem, and the possible use of mass destruction weapons during military operations. Many of these questions were answered in the report itself. However, answering them, A. Bessmertnykh stressed yet again that the Soviet Government is attentively following the development of the situation in the Gulf, is in constant contact with the leaders of the countries participating in the conflict, and is taking active steps—fully supported by the international community—to ensure that the crisis is resolved peacefully. In particular he stated that, if the Soviet President's proposals are accepted by the Iraqi leadership, the prospect of an end to the war would be within reach [realnost prekrashcheniya voyny—ryadom]. The Iraqi side's response should be received very shortly.

The sitting participants adopted a resolution noting the foreign minister's report and expressing support for the steps taken and the efforts made by the USSR President and the Soviet leadership to bring about a speedy end to military operations in the Gulf and to move the conflict toward a political settlement. A USSR Supreme Soviet appeal "To All Countries' Legislatures" was also adopted. The International Affairs Committee was instructed to produce the final edited version.

Political & Social

400,000 Attend Pro-Yeltsin Rally in Moscow

LD2202192991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Our correspondent has just reported by telephone that a concert and rally are being held in Manezh Square [Moscow] in defense of the press, radio, and television. A closed view under an open sky: This is the title of this demonstration. Its organizers and participants are the Democratic Russia movement, the Union of Cinematographers, our colleagues on central and Russian radio and television, the presenters of the "VID" program, and many well-known writers, actors, satirists, and musicians. In all, about 400,000 people have gathered in the square to defend democracy and glasnost.

Basically, the posters and placards are devoted to Boris Yeltsin, Russian television, and Kravchenko. In answer to a question by our correspondent about what led him to this rally, Aleksandr Gradskiy, a well-known musician, said: I am not interested in politics, I simply want freedom,normal, proper information; I want people's radio and television. His words were backed up by Oleg Poptsov, the head of Russian radio and television.

The rally is continuing, and more people are thronging to it. However, despite the demand of those gathered for the abrogation of political censorship, television channels for Russia, and other elementary norms of democracy, one would like to emphasize that glasnost, in the opinion of the participants, is not an end in itself of the democratic movement, but a means of disseminating ideas which can turn society toward national consensus and a dignified existence.

Further on Rally

LD2402145391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1348 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent Sergey Melyanchikov]

[Text] After the two rallies on Manezhnaya Square on Saturday and Sunday, the organizers of this rally did not expect so many people to turn up. But today, for perhaps the first time in six years, Manezhnaya Square proved to small for all those who wanted to come along. It was full to bursting a whole hour before the start. Yet the people kept on coming, despite the fact that it is a cold and windy day here in Moscow.

People were carrying homemade placards with slogans in support of the Supreme Soviet and the Government of Russia, and in support of Yeltsin's statement. There were many photographs of Boris Nikolayevich, but in contrast to those photographs that we used to carry all those long years at rallies, these were homemade, cut out from magazines, newspapers and placards.

Quite apart from its size, today's rally was noteworthy for the fact that there were fewer down with calls. The main slogan could be summed up in a single word—Yeltsin! This stood for much more than just a surname, this was nationwide support for the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

The speakers at the rally, people's deputies from the USSR, the Republic and the Moscow City Soviet, and the leaders of the Democratic Russia bloc, called on the people to join forces to defend the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the Republic against constant attack from the center.

Unlike yesterday's rally, when it was the military that gathered here, today those who turned up were the mothers of soldiers who had died in peace time, a silent reproach to yesterday's speakers who called for the Army to be protected against attacks.

Every effort was made by the law enforcement bodies to maintain order. That probably is the reason there were so many militiamen on all the nearby streets. But the people had turned up not to overthrow or destroy anything, but to voice their support for their very own, legitimately elected republican government.

Demonstration Set for 10 Mar

LD2402231491

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 2000 GMT on 24 February broadcasts an eight-minute report by correspondent Sergey Melyanchikov on the pro-Yeltsin rally in Moscow's Manezhnaya Square on 24 February.

Melyanchikov begins by saying: "I won't guess how many hundreds of thousands of people took part in the rally—perhaps 500,000, perhaps 800,000, or perhaps 1 million. I will only say one thing: For the first time in five years of holding meetings, Manezhnaya Square seemed too small. People were standing on Gorkiy Street, on Kalinin Prospekt, on Red Square. I think you have seen this yourselves on the 'Vremya' program—if they have not yet prohibited it from being shown, that is."

He then introduces fragments of speeches from the rally's rostrum, all of which emphasize solidarity with Yeltsin and his democratic efforts and reject the attacks on him by the Union leadership. One of the speakers says: "From the moment of Boris Nilolayevich Yeltsin's election as chairman, the Union leadership has been conducting a secret, undeclared war against our republic".

Melyanchikov says that leaders of Democratic Russia proposed proclaiming a Boris Yeltsin Defense Day and a Russia-wide demonstration on 10 March at 1200 [1900 GMT]. He says that participants in the rally unanimously adopted a resolution and introduces a fragment of an unidentified man reading out the resolution: "We, participants in the meeting of 24 February in Moscow, support the course of the leadership of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic Supreme Soviet led by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and the political statement made by him on central television. We express confidence in the Government of Russia and demand the cessation of the anti-people attempts by the CPSU Central Committee to overthrow legitimate popular power. We demand the recall of those deputies who are taking part in this shameful campaign. No to the Gorbachev-style Union treaty. Yes to the people's president of sovereign Russia. No to the plundering reforms of the Union government. Yes to the Democratic Russia movement".

Melyanchikov says the meeting was calm and there were no infringements of the law despite the militia units brought into the city center.

He concludes his report by saying: "It would have been possible to leave it there were it not for resentment at our fellow journalists who reported that only 150,000 were present at the meeting. If they were to compare yesterday's meeting—300,000-strong, according to the official version—with today's then they would have reported 500,000 at least. Well, may God go with them. May it be on their conscience. With you as always, Sergey Melyanchikov, of the Russian Television and Radio Company news service".

Following Melyanchikov's report, the announcer adds: "All the same, Sergey Melyanchikov, who prepared this report—excuse the tautology—during the 'Vremya' program was not mistaken. There was no report on this meeting, just as on the meeting of democratic forces on Friday. And I will tell you more. I was told by the editorial office that on the personal instruction of Comrade Kravchenko, this report will not be in any program, in any broadcast of the chief news editorial office. But, on the other hand, Comrade Kravchenko, fighting for the depoliticiation of programs and for their entertainment devoted not a little valuable air time—Sunday air time—today to a whole broadcast on the meeting on 23 February. Well, there you are".

'Alternative' Rally Held in Leningrad

PM2402211391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[PRAVDA correspondent V. Gerasimov report: "'Democrats' Storm the Smolnyy"]

[Text] Leningrad, 24 Feb—As Central Television announced, a large rally took place 23 February—the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy—in Palace Square.

Central Television duly reported this event. Incidentally, there was a sequel. An hour later representatives of a so-called alternative rally appeared on the deserted square. Roughly 3,000 demonstrators and idlers gathered in response to an appeal from the civil resistance committee (I do not know whom it is resisting) under the slogan "Farewell, Soviet empire!" As is now customary in such cases, everything was directed by the same people: Democratic Union members V. Terekhov and I. Soshnikov and Leningrad Soviet Deputies A. Rodin and V. Skoybeda. V. Terekhov uttered calls for bloody civil clashes.

Having given a loud "Hurrah!" for B. Yeltsin, the members of the column moved down Nevskiy and Suvorov Boulevards toward the Smolnyy, yelling anti-Communist slogans and calling for reprisals against CPSU members. Yet, the Leningrad Gorispolkom [City Soviet Executive Committee] did not, incidentally, authorize this demonstration. Traffic was paralyzed for one and a half hours on the city's main routes. Transportation came to a halt, and vehicles carrying food were unable to reach the stores.

Some of the mob at Proletarian Dictatorship Square were on the verge of rushing to storm the Smolnyy. They were stopped by the organizers of the "rally," who explained that today was supposedly merely a "rehearsal."

The procession caused the city hundreds of thousands of rubles in direct losses. According to other sources, it is a matter of millions. However, the day before, speaking on local radio, I. Kucherenko, deputy chairman of the Leningrad Gorispolkom, said that proceedings would be instituted against people who organize unauthorized demonstrations. Let us see whether the deputy chairman, who is well known for his sympathies for the "democrats," keeps his word.

CPSU Secretariat Preparing for Union Referendum

LD2402151891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1234 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 24 Feb (TASS)—Vladimir Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, who chaired a regular sitting of the Central Committee Secretariat which opened here today, said that support for the new Union treaty is the priority direction in the activities of party organizations. He spoke in favor of the local party committees working out specific measures for the participation of every Communist in preparing and carrying out the USSR referendum, and in explaining the necessity of retaining and reinvigorating the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic.

A political analysis carried out by experts from the section on ethnic policies of the Central Committee of the CPSU in the Chuvash republican party organization was reported to the Secretariat. The authors of the analysis have come to the conclusion that public consciousness of the population in the Republic, where representatives of 55 ethnic groups live, connect the future of the Union with the notion of a reinvigorated federation.

Valentin Shyrchanov, first secretary of the republican party committee, who was invited to take part in the sitting, spoke of the work on the strengthening of civil accord on the basis of the ideas of patriotism, internationalism, and friendship between peoples.

As analysis has shown, the Communists in the Republic are an influential political force, capable of convincing the population that the Republic's economy can only develop effectively if a single economic space is created, and that the new Union treaty will unite the efforts of all republics, nations, and ethnic groups in the material and spiritual revival of society.

Oleg Shenin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, who took part in the debate on this question, pointed out a general shortcoming in the work being done to prepare for the referendum. Too few attempts are being made to explain the CPSU's position on stabilization of the economic situation, he said. This makes it particularly important for party organizations to explain the role of cash compensation, and display concern and attention for all sections of the population, especially those which are not socially protected.

At the meeting of the Secretariat, Evan Frolov, chairman of the CPSU Central Committee's commission on science, education, and culture, reported on a meeting of this commission that had been held the previous day. The commission discussed the state of Soviet science. Speakers noted that the situation that has developed in the scientific world, and its position in society, demand serious and immediate action, above all legislative action. There must be laws to raise the status of scientists in society, protect scientific inventions, stimulate the application of scientific results in all spheres of state life and society, and give them a human dimension.

Pugo on Riga, Vilnius Enquiries Slow Progress

PM2202115591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 p 1

[V. Prokopenko report: "The Meeting Was Brief"]

[Text] Minister Boris Pugo has answered journalists' questions.

Whereas previously the press center room had seemed spacious, for yesterday's meeting it resembled a subway car at rush hour. Many questions were put to the new minister. Let us note the most important point in what the minister said: Crime in the country is at the highest level in the entire postwar period.

Tension in society is growing, and at the same time the number of guns in the population's hands is increasing.

Of the 2.8 million crimes recorded last year, more than 7,000 involved the use of firearms. The number of attacks on militiamen increased 12 percent. Precisely 193 MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] staffers died in the execution of their official duties.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] What effect has the introduction of joint patrolling had on the growth in crime?

[Pugo] We must not expect the patrols to be able to substantially reduce the growth in crime. Moreover, according to our data, the crime rate increased 18 percent in January. The USSR MVD is now elaborating a number of additional measures. And this means, above all, an increase in independent MVD patrols.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] When will you be able to speak about the results of the investigations into the events in Vilnius and Riga?

[Pugo] I recently met with General Prosecutor Trubin. Unfortunately, the investigation is making very slow progress. It has not yet been possible to establish how many people died in Vilnius... [Pugo ends]

The meeting was brief. Before leaving, Boris Karlovich received birthday congratulations and complained about the results of a public opinion poll conducted by the USSR MVD. The conclusion is somber: "In a number of parts of the country approximately half of those polled do not express confidence in law-enforcement organs."

Radio on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Open Confrontation

LD2402155791 Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Vyacheslav Solovyev commentary]

[Text] In his televised interview, the chairman of the Russian Republic's parliament demanded that President Gorbachev resign and hand over power to the Council of the Federation. Most analysts see this demand as the end of the drawnout tactical maneuvering and the beginning of an open political confrontation between the two leaders. This is a highly undesirable turn, now that the nation is undergoing a most complicated period and is to unite to overcome the social and economic crisis.

Both Boris Yeltsin's long-time political opponents and those who more or less sympathize with the Russian leader and his policies share this assessment of the situation. The liberally oriented Independent Gazette, for one, says regarding the interview that the worst has happened and although hardly anyone is able to predict how long the battles to come will take and what their outcome will be, no one can hope for positive results.

Although this pessimistic view maintains that no bridges remain in the relations between the two most authoritative national leaders, dialogue is still feasible, since both President Gorbachev and Chairman Yeltsin put national interests before personal ambitions. Both understand a split in Soviet society is real as never before and this is fraught with disastrous consequences. It would be unforgivable if the tough position of one of the two provoked the other one to an equally tough response.

Despite all the tactical differences, the two leaders' positions coincide in that they aim to carry on perestroyka and make life better for the Soviet people.

Gorbachev Centrist Position Examined

PM2102163691 Moscow NEW TIMES English 12-18 Feb pp 4-6

[Yuri Furmanou commentary: "Do We Want to Understand the President?"]

[Text] The expression "socialist pluralism" was frequently used in the early years of perestroyka. This strange hybrid of terms is the best possible reflection of the state of mind characteristic of our time. International accepted pluralism could not have been anything but "socialist pluralism" when adopted in this country, a pluralism that incorporates all the features of socialist ideology with its one-dimensional vision of reality and the militant spirit of intolerance.

Not long after perestroyka began, it turned out that the ruling Communist Party which sowed the seeds of glasnost and truth was not able to control their growth or to impose limits on the doses of truth it allowed to be known to society. Even the reformer of socialism, Mikhail Gorbachev, who sincerely believed that heterogeneous democracy could be put into the Procrustean bed of the socialist political system, could not have foreseen that the processes he had unleashed would develop so fast, ruining the Communist system at home and in Eastern Europe. However, life has demonstrated that once emerged, heterogeneity starts expanding and exceeding the confines prescribed to it, and that it is a futile business to try and set the limits of freedom in an awakened society...

Having flung open the gates of freedom, Gorbachev believed for some time that his ideas of perestroyka would be so popular among the masses that the masses would not think of anything but the implementation of perestroika plans within the limits of what is known as the socialist choice. Gorbachev seemed to be the happiest man on Earth when, during his numerous tours across the country, he saw crowds of once intimidated people raise their voice and become increasingly vocal. "The nation has been set in motion"... Soon, however, the roses of perestroika started growing the sharp thorns of economic problems and political conflicts and the idealistic faith in the imminent success of the perestroika efforts died. At the same time, along came the realization that the ideas and practice of perestroyka had to be protected. Today, when the crisis is rapidly worsening, the republics are demonstrating open disobedience, and separatist aspirations and crime statistics are climbing, Gorbachev is trying hard to get back at least half the power he wielded in April 1985 when the Politburo elected him General Secretary.

How could it happen that the man who earned world praise for his rejection of authoritarianism and violence as the means of solving conflicts has found himself in the situation when he has to resort to these methods, foregoing his convictions? This question puzzles many people in this country and abroad. Various reasons are provided to explain this. Some point at personal authoritarian propensities the President is alleged to have been expertly concealing until very recently, others regard Gorbachev's turn as nostalgia for the time of the old methods of Communist rule, still others accuse Gorbachev of renegation and of being a puppet in the hands of the "right-wing forces" and the military-industrial complex. Each of the above suggestions is open to debate, but it appears that such views are either too superficial or too politicized or come from people with no firm convictions. More convincing is the viewpoint according to which Gorbachev the President, concerned with the potentially explosive and unpredictable progress of perestroyka, has to progress along a path different from the one Gorbachev the reformer thought he would travel along when he introduced his freedom-loving ideas during the years of relative political stability and order.

In an excessively politicized society, like the Soviet Union of today, many people tend to see political ghosts behind any developments. Nonetheless, it seems strange that not only the common people of this country who have been trained to "look at the very top" for decades, but also the greater part of the most enlightened intellectuals cannot escape the temptation to seek the answer to the question "What's happening to us?" at the very top. It is only a handful of people who try to look for the answer "down below where civil life is" (Hegel).

Today the easiest thing to do is to label Gorbachev "a dictator" or to push him towards dictatorship. Many ambitious politicians are cashing in on criticism of Gorbachev, or are deriving moral satisfaction from criticizing him. In our ill-managed and confused country Gorbachev plays the role of the "switchman" blamed equally by the right and the left. While the left are emphasizing Gorbachev's sharp turn to the right, the right accuse him of selling of communist principles to the West and prodemocracy forces. As the right and the left are drifting to extreme viewpoints, it seems to them that Gorbachev is also drifting, in the opposite direction, of course. The drama of Gorbachev's position is in the fact that under the circumstances he has no choice but to remain in the centre, thus making his team and himself too static and unable to keep abreast with the dynamic and drastic developments in the crumbling empire. Besides, sometimes Gorbachev lacks the necessary political flexibility.

By virtue of his strictly centrist position, Gorbachev is displaying firmness in his determination to combine the presidency with the post of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. He continues to believe that the Communist Party still plays a stabilizing role and helps preserve order in the country.

He seems to sincerely fear that the media campaign to discredit the CP, the exodus of Communist from the party will result in further disintegration of society. At the same time he is no less sincere in his fear that the counterattack of the CP hard-liners may bury his reformist innovations and the very "Gorbachev phenomenon."

The results of the January 1991 extended plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and the CPSU Central Control Commission show that the president's fears are not groundless. Anyway, many speeches at the plenum made the democrats seriously worried because they pressurized the President under the disguise of "the struggle against anti-socialist and anti-communist ideology," into restoring the status quo. The democrats are looking for ways to protect themselves. However, the democrats' efforts to woo Gorbachev and the centre over to their side cannot be described as totally futile, but if the democrats do not drop their tactics of anti-CPSU attacks and do not assume the viewpoint of statehood, evolution and tolerance, the results may be tragic for all of us.

The main thing the President needs today is the support of the left-wing radicals, who distanced themselves from Gorbachev leaving him no choice but to seek support in such institutions as the Armed Forces, the KGB and the militia. After the tragic events in Lithuania, the left-wing radicals made a big noise about Shevardnadze's warning that "dictatorship was just around the corner," but unfortunately did not heed Shevardnadze's main point which he emphasized by saying that "the democrats have dispersed." If the left-wing radicals continue to cling to their superficially attractive anti-centre stance, soon the calls against democrats themselves will become heard at mass meetings. If this happens, we will enter a new stage, the one of "developed socialist pluralism."

The real reason behind the democratic reformer's gravitating to authoritarian rule is not the reformer's personality, the "conservative" role of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee nor even the influence of the powerful hard-liners. The real reason is the rapid progress of perestroika. Most people have realized that the totalitarian heritage must be demolished. On the other hand; today's society is unable to do this due to the "genetic code" it has inherited from the past. Although scholars continue to debate the existence of "memes" (memory genes) of historical experience, there is no doubt that at least on the behavioral level we have not travelled far from the cluster of features described by Alexander Zinovyev as characteristic of Homo Sovieticus.

Remarkably, the Bolshevik ideology does not only have a lot of devoted advocates in this country today, but has penetrated our subconscious and is influencing our behavior even in everyday conflicts. The tremendous amount of problems that this country has accumulated does not really matter. What matters is that most problems climax in antagonism. If the problems reach the critical point, dictatorship will become unavoidable. At the same time, we do not see any way to solve the problem, because we have inherited militant materialism and militant atheism from the Bolshevik ideology. Perestroika did not only liberate our minds. It also liberated from fear something that the masses have been taught to accept for decades: intolerance of and hatred for real, potential and imaginary enemies.

The ideology of militant materialism spread in the masses by the founding fathers of Bolshevism has become part and parcel of this society's existence. Very probably, when he wrote his article "on the Significance of Militant materialism" in 1922, Lenin could not imagine how tragic its tenets would be for the nation. As a Marxist, Lenin knew that in the social life militant materialism was the midwife of violence. After the revolution and civil war were over, it seemed that it was no longer necessary to advocate the use of violence against the defeated class, and that materialism as one of the visions of the world would return to where it belongs: scientific debates.

However, even in 1922 Lenin remained what he had always been: a revolutionary. He could not be appeased until there were no intellectuals left in this country who did not share the viewpoints of materialism and atheism. Lenin dreamt of a society of total materialism and proclaimed materialism an "indicting," "military," "unflinchingly exposing" force engaged in "untiring atheist propaganda."

Lenin's comrade-in-arms, Leon Trotsky, gives an answer to the question of why militant materialism became the creed of Bolshevism. Trotsky's views. Trotsky was even more outspoken when he said that to be a militant materialist was "to feel that you do not have any subjective hindrances to the struggle for the future, but there are only objective, real hindrances and resistances which must be escaped, or overcome, or destroyed, depending on the conditions of the struggle."

Militant materialism has become a part of the Soviet social practice since Lenin and Trotsky published their ideas about militant materialism in the journal Pod Znamenem Marksizma. From ideological indictments and persecution of intellectual "lackeys" of bourgeoisie and "graduated flunkeys of clericalism" whom Lenin suppressed by banishing them from Russia, and to the countries of bourgeois democracy, militant materialism became the tool of repression against thousands of external and internal enemies, educating the masses in the spirit of hatred, intolerance, suspicion and squealing. The idea spread among the populus...The "meme" of militant materialism met with the gene of human aggressiveness never to part. Atheistic propaganda accompanied by a chorus of lofty words taught people that the material was superior to the spiritual, masses were superior to the individual, the will was superior to reason, and the action was superior to the motive. As a result of this massive propaganda Soviet people have developed a baleful disease of spiritual nihilism which is becoming a normal reaction now that the ideological blinkers are taken off and the sense of fright is gone.

To answer this question, we must radically change the widespread belief that the root of all evil generating conflicts between individuals and whole groups of people from Central Asia to the Baltics is a combination of objective circumstances and conditions: the "system," poor supply, ill-considered policies, the Stalin nationalities policy, the war of parties, laws and sovereignties. Meanwhile, the main source of all our tragedies, the spirit of militant materialism, has only transformed, not disappeared in the years of perestroika, however energetic we might be in denouncing our past. We are all looking for the culprit. One can understand the intolerance and militancy of common people who fight at shops to get a pound of state-subsidized sausage, but how can one account for the militancy and intolerance of our political and spiritual elite who are putting up battles, unseemly for representatives of the intelligentsia? Is there any way to explain why the democrats are already fighting not only Communists, but each other too? Why are not only people but also different religious denominations warring with each other? Why armed force is increasingly often resorted to as an instrument of criticism?

"God save us from such prosperity... otherwise we will degenerate into a society of mutual love," wrote Bolshevik Vorovsky to Bolshevik Olminsky in the 1920s. Obviously, many of today's "spiritual leaders" fear such degeneration and try hard to politicize people's emotions on all levels instead of bringing calm to their souls. It was only yesterday that thousands of people discharged their emotions by blaming Communists. Today people blame democrats for whom they voted themselves. Not surprisingly, in the context of total confusion generated by our brand of pluralism with no goals, faith or rules, common people, and not the right-wing hard-liners, demand "strong rule." They are scared by the prospect of a free market economy, because they feel that the current war of some against some may, in the absence of a strong ruler, develop into a war of all against all. If such a war begins, then, as Thomas Hobbes wrote, our only hope will be that the real threat to our survival will activate the self-preservation instinct and this instinct will replace all ideologies returning us back to the way of civil concord, dialogue and social contract. Meanwhile, the struggle goes on....

Trade Unions Support Referendum Vote for Unity

LD2202224591 Moscow TASS in English 1258 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Yegorov]

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The General Confederation of Soviet Trade Unions has called on Soviet people to declare for the preservation of the Soviet Union as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics during the forthcoming countrywide referendum on March 17.

"Unity is the natural aspiration of people," emphasises the Confederation's address to all trade unionists and citizens of the country. The address was unanimously adopted at the meeting of the Presidium of the Confederation's Council in Moscow today.

"Those who are committed to keeping the country's unity suggest an in-depth renewal and stabilisation of the federation and equality of people and nations. By joining hands we can overcome difficulties and obstacles standing in our common path more quickly, take the economy out of the deadlock and raise the living standards of everyone.

"A split would signify the inevitable rupture of established economic relationships, threatening with unemployment, economic chaos, and disruption of basic human rights.

"A split would lead to the breakup of one of the world's largest states and upset the already fragile international balance," the address reads.

Kryuchkov on Yeltsin Ruble Scam Allegations

PM2402191591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Second Edition p 3

["Topical Interview" with KGB Chairman V.A. Kryuchkov by Viktor Shirokov; place and date not given: "Shifting the Blame... Two Questions for KGB Chairman V.A. Kryuchkov"]

[Text] [Shirokov] Vladimir Aleksandrovich, in his speech on Central Television 19 February Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet, said loudly that the KGB chairman has "a very big stock of files" similar to the one relating to the 140 billion rubles [R]. He claimed that the KGB is using this kind of material "to prevent Russia's foreign trade ties from developing." In this connection I have a question: How true is the claim that the case of the R140 billion—and I quote—"was intercepted by the KGB at a very opportune moment"? This phrase, as it were, predicates a definite political subtext...

[Kryuchkov] Any hints—and there were plenty of them in the press—that the KGB organized this "operation of the century" are no more than an attempt to shift the blame onto someone else. Perhaps, we should not once again be focusing our attention on this ridiculous affair were it not for the very "political subtext" that you so aptly pointed out.

I have already said that defense of the Soviet economy is one of the areas of state security organs' activity. We are not unique in this—that is international practice. In the course of this work we frequently receive information that representatives of individual capitalist firms, while conducting talks with Soviet partners, try to conclude (and do conclude) deals whose implementation could seriously damage our economy. Among them the deal to exchange R140 billion for dollars on clearly disadvantageous terms as far as we were concerned. There have been plenty of articles about the people involved and the motives for the aforementioned speculation. It is important to underline some more facts that may not have been made public.

One of the main protagonists in this transaction—Gibbins, a British citizen—came within the purview of KGB organs. It has now emerged that he was also on the national wanted list in Britain. The results of a search of Gibbins at customs, when documents revealing the details of the speculation were found, confirmed our fears that the deal could seriously damage the country. An examination confirmed this. Had the transaction been effected it would have had extremely grave economic and financial consequences not only for Russia but also for other republics. In accordance with existing legislation criminal proceedings have been instituted in respect of these facts. The investigation will answer many questions that have arisen. But it is obvious that its political and moral aspects may not be to some people's liking. In this connection it is appropriate to mention what B.N. Yeltsin said during his recent television interview: "I am not vindicating Filshin," "he cannot be said to be innocent," etc.

Here is another extremely important fact. Everything indicates that the deal was carried out in secret, unbeknown to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and many members of the Russian Government. The matter was not subjected to proper economic and legal scrutiny, and the requisite procedures and evaluation of experts' findings were not observed.

As for the fact that the documents regarding the R140 billion were intercepted "by the KGB at a very opportune moment." To be more precise, at the last minute. Imagine what would have happened had the documents crossed the border and ended up in another country. For all I know, they might have demanded that we honor them...

[Shirokov] Is it correct what B.N. Yeltsin said: That the KGB "has a very big stock of already-complete files like this"?

[Kryuchkov] In accordance with the functions with which it has been entrusted, it is the KGB's task to guard and safeguard the interests of the country's security. Recent decisions adopted by the USSR Supreme Soviet and president have tasked the committee with working to combat economic sabotage. In the current crisis economic situation we regard this as one of the key tasks. The KGB receives plenty of information from citizens who want the fatherland to prosper and who are worried about abuses that do the country outright economic damage. This information is checked out most carefully within the framework of existing legislation and with observance of citizens' rights. Operational and investigation subunits are today in possession of material regarding criminal suspects. But this does not mean, as B.N. Yeltsin thinks, that it is left laying around waiting for its moment to come: It is an active process; tremendous, painstaking work is done to check out this material and gather evidence.

KGB Use of Psychiatry Eyed

PM2202104591 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 6, 12-18 Feb 91 pp 32-34

[Interview with Serbskiy Institute Director Dr. Tatyana Dmitriyeva by NEW TIMES analyst Marina Shakina—place and date not given: "Repressive Psychiatry and the Law"]

[Text] In the popular television thriller, Petrovka 38, a police officer tells a thief and murderer who tries to pretend he is insane: "They will crack you in a moment at the Serbskiy Institute..." The Soviet dissidents of the 1970's were unanimous in regarding the Serbskiy Institute as a symbol of repressive psychiatry in the USSR. It is as such a symbol that the institute became part of this country's political vocabulary.

Today the Serbskiy Institute of Forensic and General Psychiatry has a new director. What does she think about her institute's image? NEW TIMES' analyst Marina Shakina speaks to Dr. Tatyana Dmitriyeva

[N.T.] When you came to head the Serbskiy Institute you could not have been unaware of the notoriety it had gained. After all, you have been a staff worker of the institute for 15 years already...

[T.D.] I understand your question and why you are asking it. Some Western Sovietologists accused and continue to accuse Soviet psychiatrists, including those working for the Serbskiy Institute of abusing psychiatry for repressive purposes. Such accusations are vastly inflated and do not consider the fact that Soviet psychiatry as a whole and the Serbskiy Institute in particular have changed a great deal during the years of perestroyka.

First of all, it must be noted that most staff workers of the institute had no information abut the people convicted under Articles 70 and 190 (1) of the Criminal Code of the Russian Republic and sent to our institute for examination. Neither did we know about the diagnoses. When I joined the Serbskiy staff in 1976 the only thing I knew was that some patients there were sent to the Institute by the KGB, the Interior Ministry, the Procuracy and the courts. People who were under investigation and charged with the notorious "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" and "slandering the Soviet system" were among our patients as well. Such cases, however, were always classified as "top secret" by the KGB and automatically case histories and other medical documents of such patients became top secret as well. Examination was performed by a selected group of psychiatrits who had "dopusk", that is, were allowed to handle top secret cases. Naturally, I knew the psychiatrists working for that Department Four of our institute and I have always respected them as highly professional experts...

[N.T.] Do you mean that other staff workers of the institute did not know anything about what was going on?...

[T.D.] You are forgetting one very important thing: all psychiatry experts are warned against purposefully false diagnoses and about secrecy of investigation. They sign relevant documents too. Today forensic psychiatric examination remains a part of the investigation process.

Another thing is also forgotten: a psychiatrist's conclusion is not a sentence, the final decision on a case is passed by the court. The psychiatrist may diagnose a patient as not being answerable for his/her actions or recommend that he/she be kept in a general-purpose mental institution. The investigating officer and the court may either agree or disagree with that conclusion: they may order another examination performed by other experts and in another hospital or institute. The court may choose any of two or more conclusions and it is the court that passes the final verdict.

[N.T.] How big is your institute's department dealing with the so-called "state crimes"?

[T.D.] We have eight beds reserved for "top secret" patients. Incidentally, these beds are usually vacant.

We make up to two thousand examinations each year. Even in the worst years the number of examinations of the so-called "state criminals" did not exceed 1 or 2 percent of the total. In the past ten years we have made few such examinations. We have also recruited new people to work for that department.

[N.T.] Dissidents used to describe your institute as an obedient servant of the KGB, saying it would pass any diagnosis the KGB required. For instance, General Grigorenko was diagnosed as fully answerable for his actions by the Military Assizes, but after he was examined in your institute, he already had a different diagnosis, the one the KGB wanted to see...

[T.D.] Once again, let me remind you that in the legal sense the conclusion made by our institute is in no way superior to those made by other specialized medical institutions. We do have more experienced experts. We do examine suspects from all over the Union, especially if local forensic psychiatrists lack experience to pass a diagnosis. But the final verdict is up to the court.

As for General Grigorenko...I have never met him or had a chance to study his case history. In his time, Academician Morozov suggested that people who believed they had been diagnosed as mental patients with no reason, submit to a joint psychiatric examination attended by foreign experts as well. However, I have not heard about anyone responding to this suggestion...

I must note one more thing: once in the West, many former patients of Department Four were diagnosed as having acute psychosis and were hospitalized (Stroyeva in Paris, Konstantinov in Vienna). We used to learn that from the papers.

I have no reason whatsoever to suspect that our institute passes false diagnoses on healthy and mentally sound people. On the whole, the problem of revision of earlier psychiatric conclusions raises a number of legal problems.

[N.T.] Still, many former patients and independent psychiatrists insist that the Serbskiy Serbsky institute is responsible for psychiatric abuse. The trust in your institute will return no sooner than the past notirety is buried...

[T.D.] Yes, I agree with you. I have aplied to the KGB chairman, Vladimir Kryuchkov, asking to de-classify our case histories archives, the more so as changes in this country have already resulted in the abolition of Articles 70 and 190 (1) of the Criminal Code of the Russian republic. As far as I know, my appeal is being seriously considered. It is necessary to de-classify our archives, so that the public could make sure that our diagnoses had been correct. The only condition that may prevent disclosure of case histories may be objections from people who had been examined.

If there had been any abuse, honestly it is difficult for me to imagine how it could work. It is highly doubtful that psychiatrists might be ordered about by telephone calls from the top. I did see cases of psychiatric abuse in some provincial hospitals, but even there such cases concerned not the diagnosis but the circumstances of hospitalization. A local boss could call the mental hospital and order that some one be locked in with no juridical formalities. Such problems, however, are problems of our psychiatric service, its legal status, its rights, rather than purely professional problems.

[N.T.] What is your opinion of the diagnosis "continuous sluggish schizophrenia"? They say it was coined especially for dissidents, that it is not recognized by the international academic community and even some Soviet schools of psychiatry, including the leningrad one...

[T.D.] The terms "continuous sluggish schizophrenia," "soft schizophrenia" (a synonym), appeared in the West and not in the USSR. My personal experience tells me that Schizophrenia like any disease, gastritis or pancreatitis, may have different forms. Any disease has extreme forms: the acute, obvious one and the chronic, sluggish one.

I believe that continious sluggish schizophrenia is an objective reality. I have treated patients with sluggish progress of the disease, but their individuality was changing, the negative symptomes were increasing and this indicated that the process leading to schizophrenic insanity was deepening.

The thinking powers of such patients were deteriorating with each passing year: this is viewed as a specific symptom of Schizophrenia. In my opinion, to say that continuous sluggish schizophrenia does not exist means to refuse to recognize an objective reality.

[N.T.] What do you think must be done to liberate Soviet psychiatry from its reputation of a repressive science?

[T.D.] The Serbsky Serbskiy Institute is only one link in the system of Soviet health care. The entire psychiatric service has to become more humane.

Naturally this applies also to our insitute and I am very resolute in my intention to make our institute more humane. In my opinion, the specific features of our work make it necessary to take the Serbskiy institute out of the system of the Public Health Ministry and the Academy of Medical Sciences and put it under the control of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. We have already taken some steps: priests are now allowed to speak to the patients and internal regulations have been liberalized. We are trying to improve conditions for our patients and make the wards nicer and more comfortable: we are spending the money that the Public Health Ministry granted to our institute for the first time. We have set up departments dealing with legal and ethical aspects of psychiatry, organization of medical and psychiatric help to convicts suffering from mental disorders, theoretical and technical aspects of forensic psychological examinations and so on. Staff workers of the institute actively participate in the working out of this country's first Psychiatric Aid Law. I believe we have to borrow the experience of developed European countries - in particular we must establish an independent psychiatric service, a national social relief fund financed by the parliament and catering to patients. Workers of such a fund (one worker posted in every large hospital) could help patients uphold their rights, solve personal and everyday problems, if necessary act as mediators between the hospital staff and the patients. Psychiatric services must be controlled by human rights organizations and the results of psychiatric examinations must be published, provided of course the patient or the patient's relations agree or demand to see such results published.

I would like to speak on something that is unpopular in the Soviet press now. The problem is the condition of psychiatrists. I have worked for this institute for 15 years and I know that those who work in forensic psychiatry are really devoted people. They are enthusiastic, dedicated to their profession and possess a sense of responsibility. They have never had any special privileges. Their pay is low, they work hard and their rights are not adequately protected, despite the fact that their work is difficult and may be even dangerous.

I am saying this not in order to justify past errors or make people pity us: I just want to present the real picture. If psychiatry is not based on a clear legal foundation, if society, does not give it the necessary assistance, this branch of medical science will not change for the better and abuses will become almost unavoidable.

West's Cure For Economic Ills Viewed

PM2202105191 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 6, 12-18 Feb 91 pp 10-12

[Boris Pinsker article: "The Last Gift For Moscow"]

[Text] Relatively few dare to try to explain what is going on in our economy. Even top officials in charge of economic affairs seem to be confused and tend to attribute all difficulties to the insidious activity of the mafia. One can only marvel at the valiant efforts of experts from leading financial bodies of the world who drew up a packaging recommendation for extricating our country from its present crisis.

While mentioning such indisputable achievements of perestroika as detente and glasnost, some writers usually forget about our unusual ability to arouse sympathy and cull gifts. The latest and perhaps most valuable gift from other countries was the elaboration of economic and social reforms for the Soviet Union. The West intends to guarantee the fulfillment of this programme by means of financial, intellectual and material assistance.

The programme was drawn up by experts from the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development [World Bank), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development with the assistance of the Commission of the European Communities. The information was supplied by the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the government's commission for foreign economic ties, the State Bank, the State Committee for Public Education, the state committes for statistics, labour, prices, material supply, the State Planning Committee, the Ministry of Finance, the government's commission for economic reform, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Ties, the bank for Foreign Economic Affairs, and many other organizations and individuals. Experts met in Moscow, Brussels, Paris and Washington.

They worked at the request of the heads of seven major industrial countries of the West formulated at the Houston summit in July 1990. These Western bodies were asked to undertake a detailed study of the Soviet economy, make recommendations for its reform, and establish the criteria under which Western economic assistance could effectively support such reforms. This can be regarded as a gift—the latest not only temporally (the report of Western experts was published on January 3, 1991) but also the last in general if the Soviet government continues to implement only quasi-reforms, that merely dislocate the economy, instead of a serious and persistent reform of the country.

The experts presented a 100-page report containing a detailed study of all major aspects of the reform. It is gratifying that the same recommendations had already been given, sometimes in the same wording, by our scholars, such as Nikolai Shmelev, Vasily Selyunin and Larisa Piyasheva and others. Moreover, the principal ideas of this reform are now being put into practice by means of shock therapy in Poland and have begun to get that country out of its almost 50-year crisis.

The medical term "shock therapy" means, in the given context, the reforms must be carried out quickly and all their principal measures implemented simultaneously, if possible. In other words, the more rapidly the operation is performed, the less painful it is and the more chances there are for its favourable outcome. The main demand for the success of reforms is a substantial and broad liberalization of prices accompanied by growing competition on the domestic market.

This demand can be fulfilled if the government "brings clarity into relations of ownership and encourages the development of private ownership with the simultaneous commercilization of large enterprises." For this purpose it is necessary "as soon as possible to lay the juridical and legal conditons" needed for privatization and commercialization. In its turn, the commercialization of management of large enterprises is not the ultimate goal of the movement, but only the provision of initial conditions for privatization of these enterprises in a possibly shorter period of time.

"These efforts need to be buttressed by tighter financial policies and a more realistic exchange rate policy so as to contain inflationary pressures and prevent major external imbalances. To cushion the effects of the reforms in the poorest segments of the society, these measures should be supported by an income policy and by an effective social safety net (including an adequate system of unemployment compensation)."

"...Time will be needed to complete this process but the initial changes have to be sufficiently deep and wide that they are seen to mark an irrevocable break with the past and to establish a climate in which private economic activities are encouraged and protected."

In the opinion of experts the West can play a supporting role in the implementation of such a reform by providing "technical assistance, food aid and selected projects. More general balance of payments assistance would only be effective if a comprehensive programme of macroecoomic and structural reform were to be implemented."

"Early and comprehensive price decontrol is essential to ending both the shortages and the macroeconomic imbalances that increasingly afflict the economy. Once resource allocation is based on market clearing prices, the ruble will become an effective medium of exchange. This should largely eliminate the economic disruption resulting from the growth of hoarding, barter, the black market, dollarization and imposition of restrictions on the free internal movement of goods."

"We see only a few areas where a case for state intervention in price setting might remain, but even in these instances prices should be raised substantially at the sart of the reform process." These areas are few, indeed. "Public ultilities (including public transport) are likely to remain public monopolies as in many other countries. Therefore, their prices are likely to continue to be regulated administratively. In the housing sector rents... will have to be raised to cover maintenance costs and to create an incentive for construction and the purchase of dwellings. Money wages will also have to be adjusted to reflect the monetization of in-kind payments for housing. The full set of supporting measures, including the legal and financial reforms needed for a property functioning housing market, cannot be put in place immediately. Thus, rents (only for existing housing) will have to continue to be set administratively, with the intention of moving as swiftly as possible to a market system.

"Intervention through border taxes might temporarily be warranted for a small set of basic inputs, especially energy products, extensively used in industry and to provide protection to enterprises that could be endangered by sudden import competition..." The rationale of these measures is to give enterprises enough time to adjust to an open competition.

"Price increases should not be allowed to place an unacceptable burden on the more vulnerable segments of the population. The preferred approach to mitigate this effect would be a combination of increases in pensions and other transfers to individuals not active in the labor forces...An alternative would be to give each person ration coupons carrying the right to purchase a fixed quantity of certain essential goods at a specified price. Those wanting more of such goods would be able to purchase them at the unsubsidized market price. A variant of this approach would be to provide each person with a given amount of food stamps which would be used as money in buying eligible foods at regular market prices...We further recommend that in the early stage of reform the government use imports to stabilize retail prices of the most sensitive basic consumer goods - bread, milk and meat." As we can see, the sphere of activity of the future State Committee for Prices is to be sharply reduced. It will determine only transport fare and rent for existing housing. Customs tariffs will become a provisional means of influencing prices.

"While the ultimate goal of ownership reform is to privatize almost all enterprises in the USSR an intermediate step of commercialization - moving effective control away from the bureaucracy to a more commercially oriented management and control structure - will be necessary for most large firms... Rapid privatization would not only hasten the benefits of private ownership but can also yield revenue at a time whe both the budget deficit and the monetary overhang need to be cut."

Since the people do not have enough money to buy even small and medium-size enterprises, "the prospective revenues from privatization should be forgone in the interests of speed and distributive equity...But such give-aways have a number of disadvantages. Most importantly a voucher system would result in widely scattered ownership which would be unlikely to result in effective monitoring and control of enterprise managers. If use were to be made of the voucher system its disadvantages could be reduced by transferring the ownership of enterprise shares to holding companies that would exert effective ownership control."

The best way would be to adopt a flexible approach to privatization depending on the sphere of activity and the size of enterprises. "We support the rapid privatization of small enterprises through outright sales to individuals, cooperatives, and others. Assets should be sold through open and well publicized auctions and as quickly as possible. Payments in installments should be permitted to promote both rapid sales and a wide distribution of assets. It is of special importance to privatize transport, storage, and distribution services rapidly... Trucks, warehouses and retail shops are easily sold off in small units, and where existing service monopolies can therefore be broken quickly."

Of special interest to the broad public is the interpretation of the question of property of work collectives (Yugoslav socialism). "The experience of labour-managed enterprises in other countries, however, has been disappointing. Workers in control of their own enterprises have tended to concentrate on the relatively short-term maximization of their own incomes, thereby limiting the employment of new workers and running down the assets of the enterprises over time. Accordingly, substantially less than a controlling share might be made available on a preferential basis to an enterprise's own work force, and those shares should be distributed to workers on an individual rather than a collective basis. Workers should enjoy the same ownership rights as other shareholders, including the right to sell their shares... in the market."

Licensing and quotas should be abolished to make the newly acquired rights of enterprises to conduct foreign trade operations an effective means of coordinating their economic activity. At the same time, foreign trade should be demonopolized so that the gains from trade are not captured by trading companies at the expense of the ultimate producers or consumers. An important step would be to abolish branch ministries so that the trading associations they sponsor would diversify the range of goods that each handles and the foreign trade organizations would become independent trading companies. Competition would also be strengthened by the ending of the present widespread prohibitions on "middleman" operations in international trade, the rationale for which disappears with domestic price liberalization.

Kravchenko Attends Republic Broadcasters Meeting

LD2302041991 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Network in Russian 1530 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent L. Kucharenko, from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] A meeting of the chairmen of republican television and radio committees is taking place in Moscow.

[Kucharenko] As you know, the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting [Gosteleradio] has been transformed into the All-Union State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company. Because of this, relations are changing between the subjects of the former Gosteleradio—the republican television and radio committees. What the union of ideological organizations should be like is being determined today by representatives of the republican mass media. Problems of property must be solved, as does the allocation of broadcast time, and this, for example, is particularly important for the Russian Television and Radio Complany. And at the present time, which can be called the time of the parade of sovereignty of the republics, political points must also be considered.

After a report by Kravchenko, the company's chairman, and a discussion of the structure of the future All-Union Council of Radio and Television Broadcasting Organizations, we recorded the following views:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified speaker] We need this council so that we conduct a single technical and personnel policy. Today no republic can exist separately and implement its own technical policy without being part of this council. So far we have been coordinating our commercial and external policy activities, and personnel policy as well.

[N.F. Okhmakevich, chairman of Ukrainian Gosteleradio] There are questions of principle, which really no republic can solve by itself. In the first place, these are questions of technical policy. Let's say, I don't know about your republic [speaking to woman], but I know that in the Ukraine, in principle, there is not a single enterprise which could today solve our technical questions. I believe that today we support these proposals; tomorrow, of course, we will make a final decision in the form which every republic sees fit, so that business will be in the first place. I am a professional. [end recording]

Armed Men Arrested in Kemerovo Oblast

PM2102143191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Feb 91 Second Edition p 3

[Report by TASS correspondent N. Marunov: "Meeting at Cemetery"]

[Text] Prokopyevsk (Kemerovo Oblast), 13 Feb—The workers of the local internal affairs administration have conducted an operation to arrest a group of 130 people who had gathered at the city cemetery. V. Krasilnikov, deputy chief of the Kemerovo Oblast Soviet Executive Committee Internal Affairs Administration, reported that when they were searched the arrested men were discovered to be carrying firearms, edged weapons, and ammunition.

An investigation is being carried out into these facts. So far it has emerged that this group, consisting mainly of people with previous convictions and no place of employment, had gathered to discuss questions of illegal activity under the conditions of the activation of the work of the internal affairs organs.

Finnish Court Rules To Extradite Hijacker

LD2102105291 Moscow TASS in English 1024 GMT 21 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Arkadiy Prisyazhny]

[Text] Helsinki February 21 TASS—The Finnish Supreme Court Wednesday ruled to extradite Soviet national Aleksandr Vilesov, who hijacked an Aeroflot jetliner on November 15. The plane, en route from Leningrad to Moscow was forced to land at the Helsinki airport.

Vilesov was charged with hijacking a plane, which is a serious criminal offense in Finland. The Finnish Interior Ministry previously rejected Vilesov's application for political asylum.

The court judgement says that international human rights agreements do not interfere with his extradition to the Soviet Union, and the court judgement is based on a Finnish-Soviet agreement on air terrorism.

Under Finnish law, the Finnish Justice Ministry will have the final say on extradition.

Vilesov is the fourth Soviet hijacker on whom such a judgement was passed. The previous three have already been extradited to the USSR.

New TV Program To Cover Military Issues

PM2202175091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 22 Feb 91 First Edition p 6

[Report by A. Ostrovskiy: "'Radar' At Service of Middlemen"]

[Text] The call signs of "Radar"—a new creative and production television and radio society—will be heard 23 February on the first television channel. It is symbolic that the new program is going out on Soviet Army and Navy Day. The main aims of the program, "Radar" general director V. Voloshin has announced, are to promote the solution of topical problems of defense building and the implementation of military reform and to enhance the prestige of military service.

I shall not reveal the topics of the first program, I shall merely note that many of them are far from frivolous. The program was prepared by television journalists with a good knowledge of the problems of "the man with the gun." "Radar" awaits its viewers on Saturday at 1040 hours.

Economic

Gorbachev Holds Meeting on Food Supplies

LD2202202191 Moscow TASS in English 1856 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev today held a meeting with heads of Union bodies to discuss the implementation of the emergency programme to improve food supplies in 1991.

They discussed reports about the state of live-stock farming and preparations for spring sowing. They noted that the programme is being implemented unsatisfactorily and that "economic agreements between the centre, republics and regions are not being realised on a number of issues.

Industrial enterprises have failed to supply spare parts, fertilisers, plant protection means, building and packing materials, machines and equipment to farmers.

The heads of the State Committee for Material and Technical Supplies, the Ministry of the Automobile Industry and Agricultural Machine-Building, the Ministry of the Timber Industry, the Ministry of the Chemical and Oil Industry and the Agro-Chemical Industry delivered reports on material and technical supplies for enterprises of the agro-industrial complex.

President Gorbachev analyzed the current situation. He instructed heads of Union bodies to eliminate all drawbacks and take measures to ensure timely preparations for the spring sowing campaign and strict implementation of the programme. He instructed them to report on the work done within a week.

Pavlov Comments on Reforming Economy

LD2202152391 Moscow TASS in English 1437 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Mocow February 22 TASS—Addressing a press conference here today, Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov said economic reforms should proceed from Soviet realities and not farfetched schemes.

"Any form of property has the right to exist and life will show which one is most efficient in the given sphere," he said. "Formerly we obstinately upheld state property, and now we are ready to foster the spread of private property. We must not overlook realities and must base our managerial system on what we really can and must accomplish. Our country has in many cases experienced grave misfortunes from various schemes."

Pavlov stressed that the process of privatisation, started in the USSR, will proceed much faster when the current Supreme Soviet session adopts a corresponding legal act.

"Privatisation is somewhat spontaneous at present and gives rise to many contradictions. The cost of privatised property is sometimes underestimated, and there are even cases when state property is transferred to private owners absolutely free of charge," Pavlov noted.

Asked about calls by some Soviet leaders to Western states, urging them to aid primarily private sectors and regions where radicals have come to power, Pavlov said the West will find it difficult to establish who is a leftist and who is a rightist in the Soviet Union, because "they all claim to be democrats".

"If Gavril Popov, the mayor of Moscow, means himself," he added, "then the West must definitely aid Moscow, but no assistance will ever save it if the present situation persists."

Turning to the government's immediate plans, Pavlov said it planned to repatriate to Soviet bank accounts the currency deposited in foreign banks by Soviet enterprises. He said many Soviet exporters refused to return their currency incomes to the country, preferring to deposit them in foreign banks and get interest money. According to Pavlov, this engenders one more inflationary factor.

"We do not object to using incomes, derived from export trade, to set up joint enterprises abroad, to investing them in business," Pavlov added, stressing that the government "did not intend to confiscate the currency by force, nor to make Soviet enterprises turn in the money they need for counter transactions."

Asked about possible restrictions on foreign trips by Soviet citizens due to shortage of hard currency, Pavlov said nobody "wants to ban the exit of Soviet citizens from the country". Nevertheless, he said the government plans to create a system by 1992, permitting Soviet citizens, wishing to go abroad, to buy money at hard currency auctions through bank institutions. He believes this would be a step towards the rouble's convertibility and towards lifting all restrictions on money exchanges.

Pavlov declared the new cabinet's intention to implement its decisions firmly without trying to "please everybody".

"We must not vacillate. We must do our job whenever we are sure we are right, regardless of objections," Pavlov stressed.

Regrets Interview's Interpretation

LD2202122991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1030 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Feb (TASS)—The Soviet Government "has cut off and will cut off" attempts to exchange rubles at the speculative rate for convertible currency with the participation of banking establishments. Valentin Pavlov, USSR prime minister, made this statement today at a news conference, while answering questions about the intentions—which have recently become known to the public—of certain Soviet bodies and banks to carry out such deals.

Valentin Pavlov expressed regret that similar statements he made last week in an interview to the TRUD newspaper, "were treated as if I had attacked Western businessmen." "I did not intend to make any reproaches against those of our partners with whom we have always conducted and still conduct business," he stated, expressing surprise over "why some of them suddenly reacted in that way."

At the same time, he said that "unfortunately something like the 'Colombian Mafia' has recently appeared in our country in the sphere of ruble exchange for currency on the 'black' exchange rate. A most natural boom in speculation began. It is impermissible for anyone to ignore such things. Pavlov stresses that no country can allow itself such a 'luxury.'"

While a speculative exchange was taking place in ready cash, in small amounts, then "it could be controlled to this or that extent. But when banking systems joined this, it increased the danger in a colossal way because of the vastness of the sums," said the prime minister.

During the news conference, Pavlov presented documents that contain business propositions using such an exchange for sums up to hundreds of billions of rubles. In particular, he read out an order from the firm of "Spartan International Incorporated" for the acquisition of 100 billion rubles, which were supposed to be delivered to Geneva to the "Swiss Bank." Another document was a proposal by the "Moscow Commercial Bank" to the London branch of the "Bank of East Asia," proposing the sale of 20.5 billion rubles. Valentin Pavlov stated: "This puts us very much on the alert. We have cut off, and we will cut off, such things."

The prime minister stressed that he does not have grounds to make any kind of claim against any foreign banks or firms, noting the possibility that the authors of the aforementioned documents are "simply scoundrels." "But I think that Soviet foreign business partners—the more so those with whom we have been cooperating for many years—should have helped us here, and not criticized," he said. "I am glad that the majority of these partners of ours have stated that they do not take part in these deals; I can only thank them for that," added Valentin Pavlov.

News Conference Detailed

LD2202221191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent S. Medvedev from the Foreign Ministry's Press Center; From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Medvedev] The prime minister did not start with any introductory words today, supposing that it was better to start straight away by answering questions worrying journalists—and that means the country and the world.

On the subject of the new structure of executive power, he stressed that it is a transitional structure, on the way to a new two-tier system of administration, and will rest on national economic planning. It existed before and does now, but will change as far as its content is concerned. So Gosplan must not remain in its current form. The main thing now is general economic forecasting, with subject monitoring of about 670 facilities which are of decisive importance for the development of the country.

Speaking of relations with workforces, Valentin Sergeyevich Pavlov said the cabinet will carry through its decisions firmly, but will not be stubborn if experience shows that it is wrong.

It was noted once again today that the reform of wages will go hand in hand with price reform, and the cabinet is not proposing any limitations in compensation depending on the wage level.

Much attention was paid today to relations with Western businessmen, whom, Pavlov said, he did not try to attack as was understood in one of his recent interviews. But if one is to speak of swindles by our commercial banks in selling rubles for foreign currency—and this is a sum of R100,000 billion—the prime minister confirmed this with the relevant documents—then this has been stopped and will be stopped.

[Begin recording] [Medvedev, speaking to Pavlov] Regarding further steps perhaps to be taken by the cabinet, there are very many different forecasts and rumors. Here are two of them: that a decree is in preparation for all enterprises and organizations to return to the Vneshekonombank [Foreign Trade Bank] within 30 days the foreign currency they have invested abroad, and secondly, that there are plans to close the door on trips abroad by invitation, because there is no foreign currency.

[Pavlov] We have discovered a simple thing, that today many of our exporters are not returning their foreign currency profits to the country. Naturally we are not planning to force anyone to return what they need there for their operational, business dealings—obviously for buying raw and other materials and so on. In this respect, yes, we are intending to take such actions in fact, but we are not intending to take away anyone's foreign currency by force.

Well, your second question. We wanted to take the path of holding foreign currency auctions, so that anyone who was travelling would sell or buy foreign currency at auction, through bank institutions, so to say. In fact our banks turned out not to be ready for this. We wanted to start this in 1992, but before this our banks need to prepare for this too. [end recording]

Pavlov's Economic Concepts Criticized

LD2302214891 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] A former member of the Presidential Council, Academician Nikolay Petrakov, believes that the main mistake of perestroyka was an attempt to introduce new economic levers, ignoring at the same time the principles of competition. The attempts to return to the former administrative and command system in managing the economy, he said in an interveiw to the press, would mean a catastrophe for the Soviet Union. The former system of management, he believes, founded such principles which are an obstacle to the economic mechanism and prevent it from gathering momentum. The academician has criticized the economic concept of Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov. He said it is based on increasing the role of the center not on the market principles.

Kryuchkov Denies KGB Organized Rubles Deal

LD2302133191 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] KGB Committee for State Security Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov has rejected any hints that the KGB is the organizer of the so-called case of R140 billion, a deal with selling Soviet rubles for dollars that has been a flop. Vladimir Kryuchkov stressed that a major direction in the work of the KGB is protecting the Soviet economy. A close examination of the deal's documents confirms, he said, that the deal might have caused serious damage to the nation. There are clear indications, said Vladimir Kryuchkov, that the deal was made secretly from the Russian Federation's Parliament and from mamy members of the Russian Government.

Congress Work out Economy Switch Mechanics

PM2202114791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Union Edition p 3

[Report by Ruslan Lynev and Valeriy Romanyuk under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Preserving the Union as a Single Economic Space"]

[Text] Moscow—The All-Union Congress of Directors opened in the House of Unions Hall of Columns on 19 February.

Unlike the first congress, at which only state enterprises were represented, this time over 1,300 leaders of enterprises in various forms of ownership, all sectors of the national economy, and all 15 republics were present. The congress was sponsored by the science and industry deputies' group as well as various associations.

A. Volskiy, president of the USSR science and industry union, who delivered the report, noted that the congress was opening in an anxious atmosphere. Statements by Ukrainian metal workers, Tyumen oil workers, Donbass and Kuzbass miners, and Tolyatti car makers demonstrate that many enterprises are now on the verge of grinding to a halt. Leaders must find a path to joint actions in view of the impending chaos. The speaker cited numerous examples in which the center takes incompetent decisions without consulting directors, who then have to implement them. Nor have directors been acquainted with the Cabinet of Ministers' program which the USSR Supreme Soviet is to examine.

The main thrust of most of the speeches was that there must be a consolidation of all creative forces and that it is important to preserve the Union as a single economic space and to end the ruinous "law wars." Economic separatism and the disruption of economic ties are particularly alarming today, and hundreds of thousands of people could be left without the means to exist. According to current estimates the production shortfall could be be 20 percent.

In this situation the center is proving slow to implement the necessary reforms, particularly in the sphere of price formation. At the same time the tax burden is increasing. The transition to the market, the congress of directors noted, is not a question of political choice—it has already been made. The solution of legal, economic, and organizational problems is on the agenda now. In a number of sectors monopolies are strong, there is excessive specialization, and thus the transition to the market cannot proceed on a single front—it will be a staggered process—and the old structures will not be replaced by new ones overnight. This process is already under way. Take the decentralization of the economy, for example: In 1985 4.5 percent of production by volume came from republic and local industry, but by 1990 that figure had risen to 37 percent. Now there are a total of 17 million lessees, entrepreneurs, and cooperative members (60 million people if you include their families).

The report and the speeches by a number of directors criticized the measures being implemented by the center in the financial policy sphere. In particular, A. Volskiy ridiculed the fears that foreign investments will buy out our economy and the country will lose its economic independence. If that were so, the United States would have been sold off long ago, because it has more foreign capital than anyone else.

USSR President M.S. Gorbachev and Prime Minister V.S. Pavlov are taking part in the work of the directors' congress.

ASTEC Committee Meeting Results Assessed

91UF0505A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 20 Feb 91 p 5

[Article by A. Balebanov under the rubric "Reporting the Details": "From Words to Deed"]

[Text]**The first meeting of the Agroindustrial Committee of ASTEC [American-Soviet Trade and Economic Council] has ended in Moscow.**

The stormy political processes in the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe have changed the psychological climate of Soviet-American relations. Previously, bilateral economic cooperation was based predominantly on the development of trade; now this interaction is directed at making the economic mechanisms of the two countries comparable by way of a mutual injection of capital and rapprochement of trade and industrial structures. Although the business partnership between the USSR and the United States is growing, the pace of its development still leaves much to be desired. The first meeting of the Agroindustrial Committee of ASTEC, which took place in Moscow, raised all these issues once more.

To recap, ASTEC is an influential public organization that includes about 350 major American corporations and banks, the Chamber of Commerce and Association of Industrialists of the United States, and several individual states, as well as over 230 Soviet ministries, departments, organizations, enterprises, and cooperatives. As for the Agroindustrial Committee of ASTEC, the decision to create it was made at the last 13th annual meeting of the council in May of last year.

The Agroindustrial Committee considers its main goal to be the active development of all possible forms of interaction between American and Soviet partners in the sphere of agro-industrial production and related fields on the basis of an exchange of ideas, technologies, and business undertakings.

Participating on the American side were such world-famous firms as Dow Elanko [as transliterated], Pepsi-Cola, Monsanto, Kargil [as transliterated], Protein Technology, and others; on the Soviet side were Prodintorg [the All-Union Association for Export and Import of Food Goods of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade] and Eksportkhleb [the All-Union Association for Export and Import of Grain of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade], the Moscow tobacco factory Yava, the famous wine-making sovkhoz [state farm] Abrau- Dyurso, the USSR Agroprombank [Agroindustrial Bank], the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Ministry of Agriculture and Food Goods, and a number of other ministries, farms, and enterprises.

The meeting opened with speeches by the two co-chairmen of the ASTEC Agroindustrial Committee—Yu.A. Borisov, deputy chairman of USSR Goskompriroda [State Committee for Environmental Protection], and G. Khegeman [as transliterated], president of the firm Dow Elanko. B. Forrester [as transliterated], president of ASTEC, gave the opening address to those assembled on the first day of the forum.

The speech of Academician A.A. Nikonov, president of VASKhNiL [Academy of Agricultural Sciences imeni V.I. Lenin] aroused interest on the American side. It concerned the most important trends in the development of the USSR's agro-industrial complex in the coming years, plans for privatization, and fundamental aspects of the transition to a market economy. Representatives of Soviet institutions then gave speeches expressing satisfaction with already-existing direct contacts between kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes and firms and associations from the United States. For example, for many years the firm Monsanto has been conducting experiments in the USSR on cultivating the land in a manner that protects the soil. Such cooperation has permitted our farms to increase their harvest, decrease weeds in the fields, and noticeably cut down on erosion.

On the final day of the forum Y.A. Borisov and G. Khegeman signed a protocol defining basic trends in the activities of the Agroindustrial Committee. The two parties consider one of the main tasks of the ASTEC Agroindustrial Committee to be the organization of trips to the United States for training of Soviet specialists in a whole array of issues of agricultural production and foreign economic activity in the agro-industrial sphere. The American side will examine a package of specific projects for cooperation prepared by Soviet organizations. It is expected that the first results in regard to these proposals will be presented at the 14th annual assembly of ASTEC, which is to be conducted at the end of May. The proposals of the Soviet organizations concern the creation of joint enterprises in the sphere of the processing and food industries.

In the course of conversations in the corridors of the assembly, representatives of American firms were quite restrained when speaking about specific steps to broaden bilateral cooperation. Among the factors undermining the initiative, the Americans often mentioned the ruling recently adopted in our country on additional taxation of joint enterprises, as well as the assignment to competent Soviet organs of the right to examine their financial activities. However, all agree that the experience accumulated by the parties will permit them, given mutual desire and strict observation of the law, to continue to find opportunities to broaden Soviet-American cooperation.

The development of trade and economic relations between the USSR and the United States is falling behind movement in other spheres. The United States' portion of the USSR's foreign trade, according to the data of Yu.N. Chumakov, deputy minister of foreign economic relations, wavers between one and 1.5 percent. Grain and soy continue to dominate our imports from the United States. Soviet specialists believe that the Americans could, in their turn, buy from the USSR for their own farmers tractors, commercial fertilizers, and several materials necessary for U.S. agricultural production. With such an approach, trade in fodder grain and soy could bring mutual profit.

Thus, the first meeting of the ASTEC Agroindustrial Committee ended. I am convinced that the seeds of the dialogue will grow into business undertakings. Only patience and time are needed.

Agricultural

Government Agrees to Buy More Grain

LD2202180791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] In the interests of implementing the USSR president's program of urgent measures to improve the food situation this year and to satisfy the population's demand for bread, groats, and bakery and pasta foods, and to insure the steady supply of poultry plants and animal husbandry complexes with mixed fodder, the USSR Cabinet of Ministers has decided to additionally purchase for state resources the 1990 grain harvest from collective farms, state farms, and other enterprises, and also from citizens. The purchase will be made in the first quarter of this year.

As a stimulus for these purchases the USSR Government has set aside cars and freight vehicles, tractors of the MTZ type, buses, excavators, motor graders, mobile cranes, ferrous metal rolled products, pipes and cement. Collective farms and state farms can acquire cars and other hardware and building materials, regardless of their fulfillment of agreements and contracts for 1990.

Voronezh Starts Allocating Land to Peasants

PM2502095791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[Correspondent V. Stepnov report: "By Spring, Without Delay!—Peasants in Voronezh Oblast Allotted Land"]

[Text] Voronezh—For a long time we complained about the absence of a legal mechanism for transferring land to the peasants. Now this mechanism is being set up and is beginning to operate at all levels.

The Voronezh Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies Presidium has ratified a procedure for allocating lands to peasant farms. It is based on union and republic legislation and takes due account of local conditions. The current document, in combination with those adopted earlier, removes the final obstacles on the road to land reform.

Now any Voronezh inhabitant wishing to cultivate the land can own plots of up to 15 ares for collective gardening and market gardening, and up to 50 ares for private supplementary farming in a rural locality, with the possibility of receiving a further hectare outside the residential zone. A different reckoner applies when organizing a peasant farm. For example, a worker producing grain and sunflowers is allowed a maximum of 10 hectares of arable land.

Land Reform Committees are now being set up in the oblast's rayons. Their main responsibility will be to designate areas for use in organizing peasant farms and to do so without delay, by the spring.

KGB Success in Combating Illegal Exports

PM2202150591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Criminal Proceedings Instituted"]

[Text] The USSR KGB operational headquarters has noted a tendency toward increased efforts by a number of farms, enterprises, and cooperatives to sell agricultural produce abroad to the detriment of the implementation of state deliveries, which is leading to growing food shortages on the consumer market. The materials of the USSR KGB Public Relations Center note that in 1990 Odessa Oblast's "Odessaplodovoshchtorg" Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale and Retail Association bought up in various Ukrainian oblasts and shipped abroad 260 tonnes of onions and 4,500 tonnes of tomato paste, the state order for which was fulfilled only 74 percent.

The hoarding of large quantities of produce at depots and warehouses and the failure to observe storage times and techniques mean that foodstuffs are getting spoiled. More than 4,000 tonnes of potatoes and vegetables were lost in the first nine months of 1990 at the warehouses of the "Petrozavodskoye" Wholesale and Retail Association.

During the period of work on the implementation of the USSR Supreme Soviet 23 November 1990 resolution, USSR KGB officers, working in conjunction with personnel from other law enforcement organs, have identified around 70 instances of spoilage of large batches of foodstuffs in 40 cities and population centers.

Criminal proceedings have been instituted in all cases where there has been a breach of the law.

Military

Leaders Attend 22 Feb Meeting Marking Army Day

LD2202144291 Moscow TASS in English 1423 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev is attending a large meeting devoted to the Soviet Army Day, celebrated on Saturday.

Vice-President Gennadiy Yanayev and Defence Minister Dmitriy Yazov are also attending the meeting.

Soviet First Deputy Defence Minister Konstantin Kochetov is delivering a report.

Kochetov Report Denies Coup Ideas

LD2202195391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] A solemn meeting today in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses in Moscow was devoted to the Day of the Soviet Army and Navy. Present in the hall were leaders of the state, prominent military commanders, veterans of the Armed Forces, and representatives of the workers. The session was opened by Yanayev, vice president of the USSR. He said, in part:

[Begin recording] The Soviet Armed Forces have always remained true to their destiny. All that was created in our land after the victory of Great October, was created under their reliable protection. The troops have shown high moral, political, and combat qualities at the fronts of military battle, in fulfilling their international duty, in overcoming the consequences of natural disasters and catastrophes. In a word, everywhere where it was necessary to show courage, firmness, and loyalty to the people. For that reason any attempts to blacken the Soviet Armed Forces, their combat past and their present role, to weaken the prestige of military service, look absurd. All of this arouses angry indignation and increasing rejection from the broad Soviet public. It must be clear to everyone that no one has the power to defame our valiant Armed Forces. [end recording]

[Announcer] A report was delivered by Army General Kochetov, USSR deputy minister of defense. His speech noted:

[Begin recording] The Army was and remains a part of the Soviet people. It has no class, national, ethnic, or other limitations. The representatives of the Armed Forces are not striving for power, and not preparing the military coup thought up in the warm offices of democratic leaders and at noisy rallies. They are not weaving intrigues against their Soviet people. The Army always has been, and will be, with them.

As a state institution it is obliged to, and will, tackle the tasks given it. These tasks should be well understood by everyone who is thinking today about the functions of the Soviet Armed Forces. Their main purpose was and remains the reliable guarantee of the security of our Soviet socialist state, and of all the Soviet peoples. Here the military understand that the new conditions demand a new understanding of security, and a more precise definition of the role of the Army and the Navy.

We realize that the country's security is not solely guaranteed by military power. It is a package of means and measures of an economic, political, spiritual, and military nature. The essential link is internal economic, political, and social stability.

Finally, to insure security today, priority should be given to political measures. [end recording]

Yazov Issues Order for Marking Army, Navy Day

PM2502152191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[USSR Defense Minister's Order of the Day No 80 signed by Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, dated Moscow, 23 February 1991]

[Text] Comrade soldiers and sailors, sergeants and petty officers, ensigns and warrant officers, officers, generals, and admirals!
Comrade veterans of war, labor, and the USSR Armed Forces!

The Soviet people and their servicemen today celebrate the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy.

The Soviet Armed Forces have traveled a glorious combat path. Born of the people's revolutionary work, they defended the gains of October amid the fierce battles of the Civil War. The people's nature of our Army was fully revealed during the Great Patriotic War, in the course of which Soviet soldiers upheld the sovereignty, freedom, and independence of our motherland, liberated Europe from fascist slavery, and performed their patriotic and international duty with honor.

True to the heroic traditions of the older generations, the personnel of the USSR Armed Forces resolutely reject the attempts to devalue the concepts of patriotism and military duty that Soviet people hold sacred, to destroy the fraternal alliance between the peoples of the USSR, to weaken the defense might of the socialist fatherland, and to undermine the unity of the Army and the people.

Soviet people and the men of the USSR Armed Forces need accord and unity of action more than ever today, along with urgent, resolute efforts to preserve civil peace, renew our Union, and creatively advance along the path of socialist choice.

The conflagration of war is blazing near our southern borders, in the Persian Gulf region. Under these conditions, while insistently implementing military reform, it is necessary to maintain the Soviet state's defense capability and the combat readiness of the USSR Armed Forces at the level of reliable sufficiency.

I greet and congratulate you, Dear Comrades, on this national holiday—the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy!

I wish Army and Navy personnel success in combat and political training, in mastering modern weapons and combat hardware, in improving ground-forces, air, and naval training, and in strengthening troop discipline and law and order. I wish war, labor, and Armed Forces veterans, our young people, and all Soviet people robust health and labor achievements for the good of our great motherland—the USSR.

To mark the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy I order:

That a festive firework display take place today, 23 February 1991, at 2100 local time in the capital of our motherland, the hero-city of Moscow, in the union republic capitals, in the hero-cities of Leningrad, Volgograd, Odessa, Sevastopol, Novorossiysk, Kerch, Tula, Smolensk, and Murmansk, in the hero-fortress of Brest, and also in the cities of Kaliningrad, Lvov, Rostov-na-Donu, Samara, Novosibirsk, Chita, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and Severomorsk.

I express confidence that the Army and Navy will continue to be the reliable guarantor of the security, unity, and stability of the Soviet state.

[Signed] Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR minister of defense.

Yazov Hands Out State Awards To Mark Army Day

LD2202224991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] On the instruction of the USSR president, Marshal of the Soviet Union, Yazov, USSR defense minister, has today awarded state decorations to a group of servicemen. The gold star of Hero of the Soviet Union and Order of Lenin have been awarded to Army General Lishenko. The highest decoration of the Motherland, it has been conferred for courage and heroism demonstrated in the struggle with the Germano-fascist invaders in the Great Patriotic War. Generals, admirals, and officers have been awarded orders for achieving the mastery of new equipment and the selfless execution of their military duty.

Yazov Lays Wreath at Unknown Soldier's Tomb

LD2302145491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Eminent Soviet military leaders came up to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by the Kremlin wall. Marshal of the Soviet Union Yazov, USSR defense minister, generals, and admirals laid wreaths. They honored with a minute of silence the memory of the servicemen who fell in the fight against fascism, for peace and the happiness of the peoples. Units of the Moscow garrison performed a solemn march past the memorial.

23 Feb Military Rally in Moscow Marks Army Day

Rumors Abound About Rally

LD2202235991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2155 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent O. Volnov, from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] [Volnov] A military rally is scheduled to be held on 23 February in Moscow's Manezhnaya Square. Public opinion is worked up, and not without the aid of messages like this: Insurrection in Moscow; We will seize editorial offices and printing houses!; Long live the proletarian revolution!

Where did you find this?

[Unidentified man] I found this on the Tushinskiy Metro on Sunday 17 February.

[Volnov] The order of the head of the Dzerzhinskiy Military Academy to insure people's arrival at the rally and to check the readiness of weapons and ammunition for issuing and to form special groups for hand-to-hand fighting, which got into the press, has created a particular stir. Other information had it that all-army democracy exercises are being prepared. [Pavlovskiy] They are dependent, they are subordinate, and they have to serve. They have chosen military service.

[Volnov] But, what about people who will go voluntarily? Have you talked with them?

[Pavlovskiy] I don't know any such in the academy.

[Volnov] In the army everything is done in a voluntary-compulsory manner. March to the canteen, march to the theater! It seems that there is also a point in the rules on such a form of democracy as a rally.

[Smirnov] I stress that the head of the academy has the right to issue such an order. I underscore once again that this directly concerns the personnel of the academy.

[Volnov] But, after all, it was not the head of the academy who drew this map, where the academy is merely one of the dots. We can already state that the minimum number of participants in the demonstration now is 40,000. But that is not all the reserves of the organizational committee of the rally.

[Smirnov] Very many servicemen will visit Moscow from the suburban garrisons. Well, in order to acquaint themselves with the sites, to visit the concert halls and theatres... [incomplete sentence as heard]

Chairman Insists No Weapons Taken to Rally

PM2202164791 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 22 Feb 91 p 1

[V. Prokopenko report: "Is the Guard Not Getting Up Early?"]

[Text] A rally is a voluntary affair. As we know, there is no question of orders. To these commonplace truths one other has been added: To the rally dedicated to the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy, forward march! This is the general sense of the order from the commander of the F.E. Dzerzhinskiy Military Academy, announced to the entire personnel (see KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA from 20 February).

Moreover, the academy is seriously preparing defense "with the aim of cutting short possible provocations..." The academy's chief engineer is checking "that weapons and ammunition are ready for distribution," and Lieutenant Colonel Sumts is forming "a special hand-to-hand fighting group of 30 men."

Yesterday this sensational story continued in the Moscow City Soviet chairman's office.

Around the table were: Yu.M. Luzhkov, Colonel V.A. Kozlov and Moscow CPSU City Committee Secretary N.M. Andreyanov, both members of the rally organization committee, and also a group of journalists.

Yu.M. Luzhkov: "The city authorities are worried by reports about the specific preparations made by the military for the celebration of the 73d anniversary and the rally on Manezhnaya Square... Who intends to attack the academy? Whose subversion must be repulsed with a fight 23 February?"

V.A. Kozlov: "We did not expect to find representatives of the press here. But this is a regular event... ARGUMENTY I FAKTY is spreading rumors... The ideas and slogans of the rally are clear to everyone: 'For the Unity of the Union!', 'Against Violence!', 'Unity of the Army and the People!'..."

Yu.M. Luzhkov: "Moscow Gorispolkom [city soviet executive committee] is depoliticized. We treat all rallies attentively. Your slogans are not without interest. But the main thing for us is democratic principles and respect for human rights. Thank you for the clarification, but I have not received an answer to the main question: Why arm officers?"

N.M. Andreyanov: "Holding the rally and defending the academy are separate questions, as it were... The academy is a state installation. As it happens, orders of this sort are signed before every rally... We want the meeting to have a festive feel. There will be an orchestra, cartoons for the children..."

Yu.M. Luzhkov: "Your words are music to my ears. But in my capacity as gorispolkom chairman I must answer first and foremost for people's safety. Now is not the time to stir up paranoia with orders of this sort. For this reason I demand that no armed units are present during the rally and insist on the review or countermanding of the academy commander's order. That is all. Good-bye."

Thousands Reportedly Attend

LD2302143591

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1300 GMT on 23 February carries a seven-minute report by correspondent Sergey Melanchik on the 23 February demonstration in Moscow. Melanchik says that interviews given during the demonstration will be broadcast sometime after 1900 GMT today. He says: "I would like to cite a phrase from Marshal Akhromeyev's interview. He said that he was glad that the people were supporting the army and that many people had come to the demonstrations. Marshal Akhromeyev rejected all rumors that there were officers with weapons on the square. He said that there had been no one with weapons on the square.

"Now about the rally itself. I will not try to guess how many thousands of people were there. I shall say first that there were many. About half were in military uniform, if an officer is not in uniform, one can always tell his status from his military bearing. Long before the beginning of the rally groups gathered in various places in Moscow. As a rule they moved toward Manezhnaya Square to the sound of military bands, which gave the impression that we were not at a rally but at some garrison event." Melanchik says some people see the army as the only way of ensuring order, but inherent in this is the danger of dictatorship. He greets servicemen on their festival. There will be more detailed reports on the rally in the evening broadcast.

'Hundreds of Thousands' Attend

LD2302183191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] According to estimates by TASS correspondents Gandusov and Ostanin, it was not tens of thousands but hundreds of thousands of people who turned up at Manezhnaya Square. They report that the rally took place under slogans of support for a renewed and whole USSR and for the consolidating policies of the CPSU, for civic peace and accord, the unity of the Army and the people, social and juridical protection for citizens, and the further democratization of society.

Those assembled were addressed by USSR people's deputies, war veterans, internationalist servicemen, and representatives of labor collectives and the creative intelligentsia. An appeal to all soviet people to support the ideas of the rally was adopted.

The TASS correspondents go on to report that those taking part in the rally included comrades Yazov, Kryuchkov, Pugo, Dzasokhov, Luchinskiy, Polozkov, Prokofeyev, Girenko, and Kuptsov.

Streets Cordoned off by Police

LD2302141991

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 23 February broadcasts a five-minute report from correspondents Vadim Kukushkin and Tatyana Feoktistova on the Army and Navy Day rally in Manezhnaya Square in Moscow.

Feoktistova notes that it was not all that easy to get through to the center of this people's gathering—the streets proved to have been completely cordoned off. On average, she says, for each street there were 25 representatives of law and order standing in a row, very tightly, cutting off any passage by car or on foot for those who wished to get to this rally. There were such cordons every few meters, so that one gets the feeling that this is not a peaceful meeting, but something very reactionary, says Feoktistova. It took superhuman efforts to get to the center of the rally, she says, as the representatives of law and order did not press cards into account.

Kukushkin then lists the names of the leading personalities attending: Prokofyev, Pugo, Petrushenko, Alksnis, Gromov. "Defense Minister Yazov emerged, but then suddenly left the rally," he reports.

Feoktistova notes that she was struck by the eyes of the participants, which did not express any joy—something one would have expected on a festive day like 23 February, Army Day. This evening, she says, Sergey Miryanchikov will contribute a special feature, with interviews with Deputies Alksnis, Petrushenko, Yazov, and perhaps many, many others.

Yeltsin Greets Armed Forces on Army, Navy Day

LD2302092191 Moscow Domestsic Service in Russian 0800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, has sent his greetings to all the USSR Armed Force Staff. The head of the Russian parliament wished them success in their uneasy military service, and expressed confidence that the hardships through which our country is going will be overcome.

Leningrad Holds Army-Navy Day Rally

LD2302174191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 1424 GMT on 23 February carries a two-minute report by correspondent Vladimir Batalov on a rally in Dvortsovaya Square in Leningrad on the occasion of Soviet Army and Navy Day.

Batalov says that the rally's organizers—the oblast soviet of war and labor veterans and the Military District command, determined its aim as the consolidation of working people, war and labor veterans, and servicemen in resolving the tasks facing Soviet society and its Armed Forces. Slogans on the banners ranged from "The people and the army are one" to "Yeltsin is a Judas." He reports that the addresses by those on the platform contained no appeals for reprisals against dissidents, contained no hatred, but there was bitterness and pain for the fate of the Army. One of the officers who spoke noted that every generation has its Kulikovo Pole and servicemen today also have their Kulikovo Pole: saving the country from collapse.

Batalov concludes: "The rally in Dvortsovaya Square also did not avoid scuffles and clashes. It was enough for someone to appear with a slogan whose meaning was not shared those present and the situation was resolved by methods that were by no means parliamentary. It is rude to push, kick, and beat a person who holds different views: that leads to even greater confrontation, But when I landed up in one such scuffle I paid with my tape recorded: it's broken. To all appearances, someone does not need an objective picture of the rally in Dvortsovaya Square".

'Alternate' Rally at Army Day March Noted

LD2302212791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent G. Sedov on Soviet Army and Navy Day celebrations in Moscow's Manege Square on 23 February; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Begin recording] [Sedov] Here it is, then: the rally! Just look how many people are here! There have been suggestions that there are 400,000, perhaps more! Looking at this sea of humanity, I cannot help recalling an article in KURANTY. It calls today's rally militarized, ordered, in exchange for days off later. It claims that the military will have arms and that our Moscow militia refuses to give assurances as to the security of the rally participants. Were people dragged here by force?

[First unidentified marcher] No! What is all that? I have not heard anything about that! I came along of my own accord.

[Second unidentified marcher] My husband stayed at home with the kids and I came along.

[First unidentified marcher] So, why have not our people just run off, if they were dragged here against their will?

[Unidentified military officer] The institution of the army in Russia, unlike in other countries, has always been as one with the people. I believe that on this day every serviceman ought to be here.

[Sedov] I did not see anything that KURANTY had predicted. I even saw this parallel, alternative meeting of 30-40 people. Nobody dispersed them, but then again, nobody paid any attention to them. But now you will have an opportunity to see and hear for yourself the way in which the speeches from the rostrum were received. Speaking now is Mikhail Nozhkin, not a politician or a party functionary. He is a poet, actor, and singer.

[Nozhkin] We must remember that we are the heirs of a great people and a great state and that the traditions of our forebears are still alive. Disintegration of the army would be suicide! There may be bad soldiers, bad orders, bad generals, and weapons, but there cannot be a bad army because the army is an indestructable, component part of any people in a state. [applause] There cannot be a bad people! [applause] The army and people are united as one! We are for the army! For a normal, multiethnic, Soviet Army! No other country advocates [word indistinct] we must remember who we are and believe in ourselves and our potential, in human, spiritual, moral, and ethical terms. Then, we will come through! We must stand shoulder to shoulder! [breaks into song] [end recording]

[Announcer] An appeal was adopted at the rally to the country's president, all levels of people's deputies, veterans of war and labor, and all Muscovites, calling on them to retain our union as a unified state and voicing support for the unity of the armed forces and the people as a guarantee of stability in society. [passage omitted]

Armed Forces Chief on Military Tasks

LD2302195891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1515 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Army General Mikhail Alekseyevich Moiseyev, chief of General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, by correspondent Vyacheslav Rusinov; from the "Radar" program—live]

[Text] [Moiseyev] The main task of our armed forces has been and remains unchanged: the reliable protection of the peaceful labor of the Soviet people from infringements from abroad on the sovereignty and the integrity of our multinational state. That is, the outer form of the armed forces is to prevent war and the readiness to defend the fatherland. To accomplish this, we maintain a state of high combat readiness in our combined units, formations, army units, and ships. It is only natural that while we are strong and have combat capability we are not afraid of anyone and we will be taken into account.

[Rusinov] It is time that we recall the following truth: For the army to be really combat ready, it should undergo effective military training. Could you please tell us whether this is done to a full extent? Are there any shortages of material support for the training process in the army and navy?

[Moiseyev] The armed forces must undergo full daily and hourly military training to be combat ready. Unfortunately, we are not always fully capable of doing this. There are many reasons for this. First and foremost, there is a large shortage of servicemen because the call-up plan for the armed forces is not fulfilled. As a result, our soldiers and officers are more frequently involved in guard and routine duties instead of undergoing planned military training. They experience great pressure. There are also other reasons. I would like to name the main one.

The point is that, apart from the external function that I have already mentioned, the army is compelled to carry out a number of internal tasks, which are not its normal job—to build housing and various economic projects, to lay roads in the nonblack soil zone, to help with the harvest, and to participate in eliminating the consequences of industrial accidents and natural disasters. The functions of protecting the constitutional rights of citizens and defending state interests within the country have been added to these tasks of late. But, by seeking out internal reserves and improving our organization, we hope to reduce the extent to which the servicemen are distracted from combat training. In general, modern combat training facilities and equipment have been established in the army and navy. But we still lack good simulators for the training of pilots, tank crews and gunners, as well as visual aids, as far as the material side of armaments and equipment is concerned. Output of those that have been designed and brought into production is too low, and, naturally, there is a shortage of them.

[Rusinov] Times are such that the armed forces also have to take an active part in resolving economic tasks, and you have already referred briefly to this. Please speak in more detail about what has been done in this respect and what is being done.

[Moiseyev] Quite a lot has been done. Judge for yourself. In 1990, the military builders of the defense ministry built and handed over a total of 3.3 million square meters of residential floorspace. This means 66,000 residences. During the last five years, as a whole, housing and hostels with a combined floorspace of 16.2 million square meters have been built. Furthermore, thousands of social and cultural amenities have been erected. Military builders are also building new population centers for the inhabitants of Bryansk oblast who suffered as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear electric power station. They are also participating in the construction of certain other projects. A total of 21 road construction bridges and eight repair and maintenance battalions, formed by the Defense Ministry, are laying roads in nonblack soil zone. In three years of work, road construction troops have handed over 1,600 km of motor roads, 12 bridges, and hundreds of water supply conduits.

Every year, the army helps to bring in and transport the harvest. Last year alone, the Defense Ministry assigned 94 transport battalions, over 46,000 vehicles and 60,000 men to help with the harvest. They transported over 30 million tons of agricultural produce.

[Rusinov] The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe continues. What arrangements are being made back home to settle our servicemen and members of their families and to provide them with facilities?

[Moiseyev] By the middle of this year, the withdrawal of our forces from Hungary and Czechoslovakia is scheduled to have been completed. Simultaneously, troops are being withdrawn from Germany. I have to tell you frankly that the withdrawal of troops is not a simple business, especially when it has to be done in a short period of time. Quite naturally, this gives rise to many serious problems regarding the provision of facilities in the areas designated for their deployment, the organization of regular combat training, and many social questions. Nevertheless, everything possible must be done to help them settle back in on their native soil. Housing and barracks run by the Defense Ministry are being used to accomodate an absolute majority of the troops being withdrawn. Every opportunity is being taken to convert premises for housing purposes. Construction of housing has been stepped up. All military construction units of the Defense Ministry have been reorientated toward solving this problem.

[Rusinov] About three years ago, the word conversion entered the vocabulary of perestroyka. But the strange thing is that, as our listeners point out, there has been a lot of talk and discussion at various levels, but little benefit has emerged, to put it bluntly.

[Moiseyev] If conversion is to work, there must, first of all, be a law on converting the defense industry. I know that this question has been tabled for discussion by the fifth session of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Briefly, what we need is a scientifically based, comprehensively thought-out and carefully planned union-wide program for converting some defense enterprises to the manufacture of purely civilian output. Until this can be done, nothing effective can be achieved. Without this, there can be no return on the investment. Furthermore, conversion itself requires a certain amount of expenditure, in fact, considerable expenditure.

[Rusinov] There is another question I would like to bring up: Plans have emerged of late, in various regions of our country, for the creation of republican armies. What does the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces think of the idea of forming a parallel army within the framework of a single state?

[Moiseyev] It does not approve of the idea. The General Staff has, on several occasions, set out its views on this in the press. I have also expressed my opinion on the creation of republican armies. I wish to reiterate yet again that our state should have united armed forces, which are well trained, equipped with modern equipment, and constantly ready to defend the motherland against any encroachments from outside.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, permit me to congratulate all Soviet people, the men of the army and navy, veterans of the armed forces, militiamen and partisans of both sexes, workers in the rear, and former soldiers in Afghanistan on our nationwide holiday, the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Yazov Interviewed on Army, Navy Day

PM2202202191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Feb 91 First Edition pp 1, 2

[Interview with Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR defense minister, by A. Gorokhov and V. Izgarshev, as part of PRAVDA's "Saturday, Sunday" feature and under general headline "Today Is Soviet Army and Navy Day"; no place or date given: "We Serve the Soviet Union! Our Interlocutor is Marshal of the Soviet Union D. Yazov, USSR Defense Minister"]

[Text] [PRAVDA] Dmitriy Timofeyevich, let us first of all congratulate you on the occasion of the holiday...

[Yazov] Thank you, and please accept my own heartfelt congratulations in return. Soviet Army and Navy Day is a nationwide holiday, and many Soviet people are directly affected by it. There are those who are in the Army's ranks today. There are those who have already performed their constitutional duty. There are also those who create combat equipment and weapons. To put it briefly, this is a holiday of all Soviet people whose labor has strengthened and is still strengthening the country's defense capability. Nor can I fail to mention our veterans and our servicemen's wives and children—23 February is also their holiday, just as it is a holiday for all mothers and fathers whose sons are in the Army's ranks.

[PRAVDA] The combat path traversed by the Soviet Armed Forces spans 73 years of marches, battles, and intensive military labor. The main landmarks along this path are well known, they are implanted in each Soviet person's memory. And memory is inseparable from our traditions, including combat traditions.

[Yazov] Indeed, all through the Armed Forces' history our soldiers have not only preserved but have also augmented the military traditions of preceding generations of the fatherland's defenders. You must agree: Love for the fatherland, loyalty to the oath and the flag, high standards of military skills and morale, friendship, and soldiers' comradeship have been honored always and everywhere.

[PRAVDA] Of course, on this day we could have—as was repeatedly done in the past—printed the traditional "holiday" article. But today we would like to converse with a man whose life can illustrate to a great extent the combat path traversed by our Army.

[Yazov] That is maybe going a bit too far...

[PRAVDA] But we are sure our readers will agree that the path which took the military school cadet of 1941 through the trenches and battles of the Great Patriotic War, through postwar service at all command posts in the ground forces, through study in two academies, and all the way to the top military post in the country's government is something far from ordinary...

[Yazov] It was a long path, true enough, and a great deal was also done. But if I am to look back over the past, this would be done only for the purpose of checking that the path ahead is correct, of consulting those with whom you shared the cadet's salt and sweat and the dried biscuits of the front line, those who helped you by word and deed, who supported you and gave you good and sound advice during your service. There have been many such people in my life, and I am sincerely grateful to them all.

[PRAVDA] Let us try to imagine the impossible: A meeting here, in this spacious office, between Lieutenant Yazov, platoon commander on the Volkhov Front; Colonel Yazov, commander of a Soviet military unit in Cuba during the Caribbean crisis; Colonel General Yazov, commander of a military district; and Marshal of the Soviet Union Yazov, defense minister.

[Yazov] Journalistic flights of fancy? Would you like me to join you? Fine, let's try...

[PRAVDA] And so, what would they say at their meeting?

[Yazov] I think their minds would turn to two remarkable persons, Siberians from Omsk Oblast's Yazovo Village—Fedor Nikitovich Yazov and his wife Mariya Fedoseyevna. My stepfather and my mother. My father, Timofey Yakovlevich, died seven years before the war, leaving my mother with four very young children. My stepfather, who was also left with four children after his wife's death, married my mother, who was his late wife's sister. So much for a rural story. Two more children were added to the family later. And so, on meeting here, we would say: Filial gratitude to the parents! We would bow our heads like good Russians, and would report that we have fittingly served the fatherland. My stepfather died in 1941 on the Volkhov Front, and is buried in the same grave as our Ninth Company's NCO, Oreshkin, and its commander, Solovyev, whom I replaced. But is this maybe a little too personal?

[PRAVDA] The personal is part of the public. It is a pity that we forget this only too often. But what would these four hypothetical Yazovs say about our Army, Dmitriy Timofeyevich?

[Yazov] You see, the service performed by each one of them corresponded with the Army's image at different stages in history. The scientific and technical revolution has radically changed the arms and combat equipment, and consequently the way they are used... This is a major topic, covering the essence and progress of military reform and all aspects of service by the personnel. Many changes are now under way in the Army. And even more are yet to come. This is understandable. The country is going through perestroyka, and so is the Army, naturally. Some people would like the Army's perestroyka to occur as if by waving a magic wand—wake up the day after the holiday, and the Army is different. Things do not happen this way. The perestroyka process covers all spheres of the troops' life and activity. It affects everyone—from soldiers and seamen to the minister of defense.

[PRAVDA] The holiday and the reform apart, today we are unlikely to get by without talking about events in the

Persian Gulf region. Alas, the war in this hot spot of the planet is not abating and readers are extremely alarmed. What can you say about this war?

[Yazov] I would like to believe that the war may end soon. But let us ask oursleves: If the war ended, would the policy pursued by the United States in the Near East also vanish? Nowadays we are striving to somehow push everything of a class nature onto the "back burner," war no longer seems to have any class aspects, and generally it seems to be just a "game." But this latest "game" has already cost people very dearly.

Saddam Husayn cannot be vindicated. There are no bad or good aggressions. Aggression is aggression. But nor can one justify those who are destroying a totally innocent people.

[PRAVDA] But how about the test of the effectiveness of the latest high precision weapons, cruise missiles, munitions, and state-of-the-art aircraft?...

[Yazov] Yes, they have tested the new-generation weapons. But, while possessing the UN Security Council mandate, the United States seems to have gone beyond it. Let me repeat, its bombs and missilies are destroying not only Iraq's military might but also its cities, streets, and monuments.

[PRAVDA] To judge from the last month as a whole, what have we seen there, what have we learned there?

[Yazov] When it comes to the air operation, we have indeed noted some new things. What specifically? I think that is a topic for a separate discussion. What I would like to mention in this connection is this—the reaction of some of our commentators. They have begun to admire U.S. technology, but—they say—the Soviet technology used in Iraq is worthless... I have already been asked: How do I assess Soviet-produced technology? The multinational forces have approximately 2,500 aircraft there. They are almost all the latest models. The Iraqi side has at most a couple of squadrons of MIG-29's. You may have the most sophisticated aircraft or even a squadron regiment [as published], but what will they be able to do against thousands? No one has assessed Soviet-produced technology from this standpoint. For instance, a Syrian tank division of T-62 tanks is taking part in the anti-Iraq coalition. How have they performed? I know that not one tank has lagged behind, not one has become unserviceable. This is in the desert. What about the U.S. Abrams tanks? They have to be stopped frequently so filters can be cleaned. So there is no reason to say that the Abrams is good and the T-62 is bad.

I am in favor of studying experience and taking it into account. But this is not a war whose experience can be taken as a "pearl."

[PRAVDA] The war is going on near our borders, a couple of hundred kilometers away. What is being done in our southern districts to make our territory safe from possible military consequences, just in case?

[Yazov] The troops of the Transcaucasus, North Caucasus, and Odessa Military Districts and the forces of the Black Sea Fleet have not been placed in full combat readiness. Alert status [boyevoye dezhurstvo] and space and airspace surveillance have been stepped up, and electronics intelligence has been intensified. Intelligence collection by space assets has worked more purposefully. There has been no need to place the troops and fleet forces in a higher state of combat readiness.

[PRAVDA] Events connected with the fate of the Warsaw Pact Organization worry Soviet people as much as the Persian Gulf, maybe even more...

[Yazov] The foreign and defense ministers will meet in Budapest Monday 25 February for a joint session to adopt a decision on disbanding the Warsaw Pact military organization. The Warsaw Pact is ceasing to exist as a military organization. If links are going to be maintained, they will only be bilateral. Why do the former partners want to keep such links? There is a certain economic interest. After all, the Warsaw Pact was not only a political organization, it was also a military-economic alliance, and links were so interwoven that you cannot sever them in a trice.

When we were negotiating in Vienna on reducing conventional forces in Europe, we operated on the basis of blocs: They have NATO, we have the Warsaw Pact, they have so many thousand tanks, we have so many, and so forth. Now that our bloc has practically ceased to exist, instead of having a 1:1 correlation of forces we will have a 1:1.5 correlation and a 1:2 in terms of certain types of weapons.

In my view, a state of affairs whereby the United States found itself in an advantageous position in all negotiations was allowed to occur in the past—it is now difficult to determine at what level and when. When the talks began, the territory of both Canada and the United States and their armed forces were outside the framework of the talks, outside the framework of reduction, so to speak, outside the mandate. So now we are making cuts, the Americans will come along to monitor us and will do so repeatedly, but we will not be monitoring them, for they present only what they have in Europe. But practically everything we have is in Europe.

[PRAVDA] Of course, talks are inconceivable without compromises and mutual concessions. But don't the results of certain agreements resemble a game with only one set of goalposts?

[Yazov] I admit, I am very alarmed by the one-sided concessions. Eighty percent of our population lives in the European part of the country. And a considerable part of industry is concentrated there too. The backbone of the economy...

[PRAVDA] And from the strategic military viewpoint the NATO bloc will now in practice be confronting our state alone?

[Yazov] Yes, and those who until recently were in our bloc are prepared to go over to the other side.

[PRAVDA] In short, the strategic military situation on the continent is changing fundamentally?

[Yazov] Of course.

[PRAVDA] Does this fact worry you?

[Yazov] It does worry me, although I can see that today, regardless of whether it worries me or not, there is not going to be a war. Neither today, nor tomorrow, nor the day after, nor in a year's time. But we must not judge state policy in primitive terms and live only for today. We must envision what will happen in 15 or 20 years. Judging by the dynamic prevailing today in relations between states, we must not cease to be alert and vigilant. If it were an honest game—the Warsaw bloc disbands and NATO as well—that would be different. But NATO remains.

It would have been possible to ignore what is now happening in Europe and in the East, to close our eyes and not think about the future, but it is not possible to close our eyes because we are hearing things. We have not even had time to get back home but people are already beginning to talk about the return of territories. If we are strong, people will take account of us. Politicians must remember this.

[PRAVDA] It is a tricky situation...

[Yazov] It is tricky. We are leaving East Europe. Is this a good thing or a bad thing? I think it is normal to return to your own borders when at one time you had to leave them. We are withdrawing from everywhere, fully, so to speak. For 45 years we jointly created mighty infrastructures, adopted documents, and made plans. Now there is no legal, moral, or practical need for all this.

Of course, you can draw a plan on a map, calculate, and think without incurring any special expenditure. But we are not only withdrawing people, we are withdrawing colossal material resources. And this requires colossal funds. I mention this merely so society is aware of our great "sore points" and so at long last it regards them not as the Army's but as its own, nationwide sore points.

[PRAVDA] The Army and society... That too is a tremendous question nowadays. Everything used to be simple—the "beloved offspring of the people." But now just look how people are suddenly assailing this offspring: close the radar station, remove the airfield, we are not going to allow our beloved child to serve further afield than his own village...

[Yazov] All that indeed exists. I would say it stems from a failure to understand the position and situation. And clearly it is now necessary above all to investigate into what strata our society is divided. I personally cannot understand: Who are the democrats and who the conservatives? Someone who espouses socialist positions, the positions of a unified union state, is regarded as a conservative. And someone who is prepared to sell the motherland down the river, to ruin the Union, to retreat into national compartments, and to pull the Army apart is a democrat. It is absurd.

[PRAVDA] Many people argue: We are in favor of peace, we should disarm, why do we need weapons and an Army? And this is said from Kremlin rostrums. Many people speak of conversion, although they do not understand the very word "conversion." The military are engaged in conversion, they say, let them produce cars, they are engaged in conversion, let them produce aircraft. Close such and such! Hand over the building!...

[Yazov] You are right. "Gimme" is now in general the most popular word in our society. And even in the Army too many people are infected with this "gimme." Give me housing, give me a car, give me more pay, give me a promotion, if possible ahead of time... We have bred freeloaders in all strata of society. And the Army is no exception. Do not think I am against housing, pay, and other social benefits. God forbid, so to speak. But let everyone think together how they can resolve all this by their own efforts, not by relying on a kind uncle. And it is a fact that we can do this.

Now is the time when frontline soldiers are retiring. I can tell you that there are now 103 frontline soldiers serving in the whole Army. Young people are coming in and replacing the older generation. That is good. But all the same, the experience and deeds of the older generation must be valued. After all, the older generation did a very great deal for the Army, for the motherland. In cold, hunger, and privation...

[PRAVDA] All the more reason, then, for not taking revenge on history. After all, you cannot rewrite history, because it has happened... Yet some of our historians already want to put Kolchak instead of Frunze on a pedestal with Blyukher. Well, the admiral was a patriot, to their mind. What about Frunze? What about Chapayev?

[Yazov] It has gotten to the point where in some places they do not celebrate the October anniversary as a national holiday, and Soviet Army Day likewise. What are we going to celebrate, then, if we renounce our hard-won festivals? Easter, Christmas, let them be celebrated, I am not against it, there is nothing wrong with it. But we have gotten to the point where we do not want to celebrate anything Soviet. Is there any other country in the world where they are so dismissive about their history?

[PRAVDA] But the Armed Forces are hostages of our present social condition, or, rather, confrontation. This is undeniable...

[Yazov] Unfortunately... Look at the storm of indignation provoked by the arrival of the little aircraft with the young man on board. All this was used for the purpose of attacking and slandering the Army. "What generals they are, that an amateur pilot should land right on their hats." And what about the military patrolling with the militia? Do you think the generals are planning a coup?

[PRAVDA] Incidentally, the word "general" has been almost a term of abuse for some time now.

[Yazov] Perhaps nowhere else are they as disrespectful of the Army as we are of ours... No, I am not talking about the people as a whole, but about certain of their "representatives." A people's deputy from North Ossetia came to see me today. An expert horseman he is, and he wept. They come from South Ossetia and they weep, they come from Nagorno-Karabakh—Armenians and Azerbaijanis—and they weep. They are shooting one another, beating one another, and no one can stop them. But we have everything—a Soviet of the Union, a Soviet of Nationalities, and a Federation Council. So why are the people in tears? Are we not capable of putting a stop to the confrontation and the internecine strife, and moreover our boys in uniform are dying...

In short, there are many problems, and all these problems, if they remain mere words for certain people, will literally all have to be endured by the Army, will have to be filtered through the Army.

[PRAVDA] What does it actually mean for society [word illegible] of one million people? It seems to us that there is much the people's deputies do not fully understand either, and they are supposed to wield legislative power and take charge of our ruble...

[Yazov] Some deputies, you see, want to make a name for themselves in lawmaking, in the creation of a rule-of-law state. That is fine. However, sometimes one senses haste, a fondness for improvisation. For instance, they decided that students would not be drafted into the Army. In two years we drafted around 175,000 students. Who is going to take the place of this group, the most highly trained and competent, at the missiles, in the tanks, and on the submarines?

[PRAVDA] So maybe we need a radical reduction of the Armed Forces?

[Yazov] But we are radically reducing them. We had 4.2 million when I became minister; now there are fewer than 3 million.

[PRAVDA] We have deliberately not talked about the dreaded bullying, but we just want to ask: What still worries you, as defense minister?

[Yazov] Most of all the reduced appropriations for research and development. As you know, we made the T-34 tank before the war. What if that tank had not been developed and tested? It would have been harder to do it in the war. Although much was developed in the war. But now technology is so complex that all the time we are having to perform critical analyses, look for new materials which could be used to make weapons, and, at the same time, develop the tactics and methods of using them. You need a major scientific effort for this.

But now we have cut appropriations by more than 2 billion. OK, some work can be postponed for now, but I have no grounds for saying that the situation will not be the same next year too.

[PRAVDA] As far as we know, you are tackling the situation by cutting military equipment orders, by ordering, say, 800 instead of 1,000 tanks...

[Yazov] Fewer than that, in fact.

[PRAVDA] It seems to us that appropriations for research and development should not depend on any other circumstances. After all, it is the key question in military progress, the foundation of our activity...

[Yazov] The thing is that it is difficult ordering anything today anyway. Do you really need the tanks today, they ask. No, we can manage without new tanks for three or four years. But what do you do about plants? About the working class? Dismiss them? In four years they convert a plant to new production and in five years' time we say to them: Comrades, give us some tanks, we are out of them.

[PRAVDA] Meanwhile, the Americans have allocated major appropriations for the so-called "tank-2000"...

[Yazov] Precisely. And not only for a tank. Within the framework of the SDI program they have already completed work on dozens of technologies for producing various materials, subassemblies, different types of equipment, and so on. You cannot just go and close plants. On the contrary, you must always be improving what you are making...

Now, the appropriations... Some 65 billion, in old prices. Yet our total expenditure on defense is only one-fifth that of the Americans.

What a situation... I, the defense minister, am responsible for the country's defense. I cannot forget that...

Another couple of words now about attitudes toward the Army. We held a parade to mark the 45th Victory anniversary. So many smiling faces on the streets and in the squares, so much pride we saw in our defenders. You will remember how people crammed into the military site at last year's PRAVDA festival.

I am convinced that those who claim that people have stopped loving the Army are either provocateurs or enemies. How can people not love their own children? Yes, we have many shortcomings and defects. People do get killed in the Army and in some barracks young men are plagued by bullies. Unfortunately, it is true. We are not out to offer excuses... We will work on it.

[PRAVDA] But it is the soldier who is the first to come to the aid of people in trouble. It was the soldier who saved the harvest amid the rain and mud, who threw himself into the nuclear inferno that was Chernobyl.

[Yazov] Yes, indeed, 600,000 soldiers went through the Chernobyl experience.

The soldier is at his post day and night. He is serving his people with dignity and honor...

Deputy Defense Minister on Army, Navy Day

LD2302124191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1046 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Konstantin Alekseyevich Kochetov, USSR first deputy defense minister and Army general, by correpondent Dmitriy Kurilenko, place and date not given; captioned "Today is Soviet Army and Navy Day"]

[Text] [Kurilenko] Konstantin Alekseyevich, I will start with a traditional question: What feelings and thoughts are evoked in you by this routine anniversary of the birth of our Army?

[Kochetov] The 73d anniversary of the Armed Forces is being marked by the Soviet people, by the men of the Army and Navy, is an extremely complicated sociopolitical situation in the country. Therefore today, as never before, the main thing is a feeling of alarm for our great homeland, a feeling of responsibility for the preservation of our Union. At the same time there is a feeling of gratitude, loyalty, and devotion to our older generation, which defended the honor, freedom, and independence of our homeland in the struggle against our enemies.

These failings are also aroused by the contemporary military- political situation. Undoubtedly today, as we observe, the military threat to our country has declined. But one cannot fail to take into account the fact that, unfortunately, the policy of the United States and NATO toward us remains contradictory. While the Warsaw Pact organization has in essence virtually ceased to exist, the NATO organization is improving its adminstration. It is carrying out improvements in all areas, both in military equipment and in the further development of this whole bloc.

Therefore of late—evidently—and by no means by coincidence, some circles in the West have, in general, begun at times dictating to us their conditions, including conditions in internal policy. Now is is some of our actions conunected with the Baltic area that they do not like, now it is our actions in the Caucasus that they do not like. Therefore they are trying to use various types of economic and political influence...

[Kurilenko, interrupting] and pressure...

[Kochetov]...to achieve the relevant aspects they need. Our country, too, is living through a complicated time. The social crisis has, in essence, reached a dangerous point, beyond which it is difficult to say that even the Soviet Union will remain. Forces have really got themselves organized, and are operating openly—forces whose aim is to push aside our supreme bodies of leadership, whose aim is, in essence, to replace our social structure: in essence, to restore capitalism. A real class struggle is in progress in society—a struggle for power.

We military people cannot close our eyes to everything that is going on. We also understand that the Army stands between the anti-perestroyka forces and the achievement of their aims. The Army is one of the most solid supports of statehood, unconditionally fulfilling its constitutional duty. Together with the majority of the people and the country's Supreme Soviet, the Armed Forces come out for a federal, socialist Soviet Union.

Only the preservation of the union state will afford us the possibility of guaranteeing it reliable security. The experience of the Great Patiotic War showed the whole world the great solidarity of our union state, one of the most important factors in the victory over fascist Germany.

Today the Armed Forces—despite blows being struck against them from various directions, one can say—remain a firm state structure. They are united, efficient. They firmly guard our Constitution, our state, implementing the decisions of the Supreme Soviet and the decisions of the president of our country. It is precisely for this reason that the Army and Navy are at the center of claims by all public forces.

We are not against the criticism that has developed in the mass media today, if this criticism is constructive. Of course, we are against anti-Army propaganda. Today is is fitting to remember that no army in any country of the world is subject to such savage—moreover unjust, if you like—criticism as ours. For this reason, if I am to end the reply to this quesiton on a more buoyant note, then it must be said that nevertheless the anniversary of our Armed Forces first and foremost arouses reflection on what has been created, and what is to be done for the further strengthening of the Union's defense capability and its united multinational Armed Forces—the history of the birth and development of which are inseparable from the history of our socialist state.

[Kurilenko] What does the special program for the social protection of soldiers and their families consist of?

[Kochetov] You know this is probably one of the sorest subejcts—social provisions for our officers, warrant officers, and their families. The Defense Ministry worked out a comlex program, adopted and approved by the government, which includes a group of legal measures—material, financial provision, medical, and other measures. The most important part of this program is the decision on the housing program. You probably know that at the moment in the Armed Forces there are more than 180,000 officers and warrant officers without housing.

Therefore, their provision with apartments, taking into account the fact that our troops are being withdrawn from the countries of eastern Europe, acquires exceptionally enormous, political importance—great importance. Therefore—probably—the solution of this problem is undoubtedly beyond the capacity of the Armed Forces and the Defense Ministry alone. Therefore, alongside the fact that the Defense Ministry is itself taking great measures for this—measures such as our constant fulfillment of the plan for capital construction and house building, and we have put 3.3 million square meters of housing into use this year—at the same time, taking into account compensation for the withdrawal of our troops from the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, an intergovernmental agreement has been signed under which the Federal Republic of Germany is giving the Soviet Union 7.8 billion marks, exclusively for house building. What do 7.8 billion marks mean? They mean 36,000 apartments. We believe that we should not only build 36,000 apartments for this amount, but also want four house-building combines to be built, with a capacity of 100,000 square meters per annum each. In total, taking into account the Soviet side as well, this program includes the construction of 4 million square meters of housing, which means 72,000 apartments: in other words, 36,000 apartments for the 7.8 billion marks, and 36,000 apartments taking into account the solution of construction tasks with our own resources, the resources of the Soviet Union.

[Kurilenko] What is the timescale calculated for this?

[Kochetov] This program is calculated to last up to 1994. It has been precisely planned with the schedule for the withdrawal of the troops from the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany.

But you yourself understand that 72,000 apartments, under conditions when there are almost 200,000 people without apartments—in essence, the whole problem cannot be completely solved in four years.

[Kurilenko] But nevertheless, there is a lot of help ....

[Kochetov] Yes, of course, there will be help. But at the moment the situation is worsening, and has already gotten worse, in the Moscow region, in Moscow. Unfortunately, the reaction by the Moscow City Soviet and the reaction of Comrade Popov, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, and Comrade Stankevich, first deputy chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, has a somewhat different aim. The fact is that the Moscow City Soviet, over the last year and even in recent years, has not fulfilled the decision of our government, and owes the Ministry of Defense more than 140,000 square meters of housing. This is a large number.

Now it seems that it is not in condition, and does not particularly want, to pay back, to return this debt. Now all sorts of reasons are being found, and they even talk of including our own construction, by our own efforts, in the allocation plan, saying that we allocate housing badly.

[Kurilenko] I would like to return to the holiday theme. Today our Army, our Armed Forces, are 73 years old. What would you, as first deputy defense minister, wish for all the people connected, in one way or another, to service in the Army?

[Kochetov] Of course, the Armed Forces, despite all the problems facing them, are obliged to fulfill the tasks defined by the Constitution. Our Armed Forces are at present carrying out much work in improving military and political training and their own fighting skills. I would like in the first place to congratulate on the 73rd anniversary of our glorious Armed Forces the whole personnel of the Army and Navy. I would like with great gratitude, and particularly with warmth, to congratulate our veterans of the Great Patriotic War, who did everything to achieve the honor, freedom, and independence of our fatherland, and who even today keep their powder dry—who even today, as our country's genuine patriots, with great pain pronounce those words, and with great hope see that our Union remains united, powerful, and inviolable. I wish them good health, peace, happiness, and prosperity.

Akhromeyev Discusses Military Affairs

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[Interview with Marshal of the Soviet Union Sergey Akhromeyev by correspondents Dmitriy Sychev and Mikhail Markelov at Manezhnaya Square, Moscow, on 23 February; from the "Panorama" program—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Comrade Marshal, the confrontation between the center and Russia has recently increased. I fear that this may result in the army turning into the same kind of weather vane as it was in the Baltic. Your prognosis?

[Akhromeyev] The army has never played and will never play the role of a weather vane because the army...

[Correspondent, interrupting] And the role of a policeman?

[Akhromeyev] The policeman role it has never played and never will. You must ask yourselves: What is the cause of the aggravation of the situation in the Baltics? Then, I will answer you: you must obey the laws of the USSR. You must obey the USSR Constitution. The Supreme Soviets of the Baltic states said that, for them, the USSR Constitution did not exist, and that was where the confrontation started.

[Correspondent] What way do you see toward a solution of this issue?

[Akhromeyev] There is only one solution: everybody returning to obeying the Constitution, and those republics that supposedly want to secede from the USSR—well, you must hold a referendum, and if we are convinced that the majority of the people really want to secede on the basis of the referendum, a constitutional process of seceding from the Soviet Union should begin.

[Correspondent] Before this meeting, in many mass media, in many newspapers, things were published, facsimile reproductions of various orders issued by academies, etc. What can you say about this situation?

[Akhromeyev] Quite a bit, because in the army nothing is done without an order. If they need to announce at an academy with, say, 1,000 students and around 1,000 teachers and staff, that they have an order issued by the head of the academy that announces that on such and such date there is going to be a meeting, and they are allowed to participate, some in their uniforms, some not, you must inform the people.

[Correspondent] Comrade Marshal, I am now reading an extract from the MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS: The information that, according to their instructions, the servicemen who come to the meeting may carry and use, if need be, combat weapons. This information has prompted the subcommission of the Moscow City Soviet for the protection of rights of the citizens to issue an appeal to Muscovites and the visitors to the capital, recommending that they stay off the streets in downtown Moscow from 1130 till 1600. Your comments?

[Akhromeyev] This newspaper has published a lie. Nobody is carrying weapons here.

[Correspondent] Comrade Marshal, what is your attitude toward the establishment of national guards in the republics?

[Akhromeyev] I believe it is unacceptable. It is unacceptable. This contradicts the Constitution.

[Correspondent] And toward the establishment of the National Salvation Committee of the USSR?

[Akhromeyev] I have no idea what such a committee is supposed to be, and in my opinion, there is no need for such a committee. There is a president and there are the supreme organs of state power. They are in a position to solve the problems.

[Correspondent] So, one can rest assured that if a demand is issued by the National Salvation Committee of the USSR that, say, the Taman Division should set out to reestablish order in one of the republics, such an order will not be implemented?

[Akhromyev] It is a disgrace! What National Salvation Committee? The Army is subordinate to the president, the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies and implements their decisions. You must adhere to the USSR laws and the USSR Constitution. This is what you need. If it is so, the Army personnel will stay in their barracks, and nobody will see it. As for leaving the union, if the people so decide, that must be done through a constitutional process.

Official Interviewed on Military Reform

LD2302144891 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] On 23rd February the Soviet Armed Forces mark the anniversary of their establishment. With the rest of Soviet society, the armed forces are going through a period of drastic perestroyka, and here is more from the First Deputy Chief of the Main Military Political Board of the Soviet Armed Forces, Colonel General Aleksandr Ovchinnikov. [Ovchinikov said:]

Since 1985, when the country proclaimed a new defense doctrine, there began a reorganization of our army life. A package of cardinal changes in the army and the navy had been prepared, it's before the current session of parliament and covers a whole number of bills. These bills are first of all about the procedure for undergoing army service, secondly they are about the status of the army servicemen and, thirdly, they delineate the functions of the Soviet Defense Ministry and other agencies. They also define the functions that the union republics delegate to the Defense Ministry. Apart from this, the military reform, its course will depend on international agreements, above all the Vienna accords on reducing conventional armaments in Europe and the Soviet-American accords on cutting back the strategic offensive armaments. Talks on the last issue are in progress.

The military reform contains many problems related to the social protection of the army servicemen, and this is a special program, it's being endorsed and taken under the control of the cabinet. The work is extensive, if it takes legislation shape in February or March, then of course changes under the military reform will practically begin in the first half of the year.

Changes are also taking place in the military-political agency. There is an opinion that this is just a change of the sign. Colonel-General Aleksandr Ovchinnikov again said: In keeping with a presidential decree, bodies are being set up in the armed forces that are different in principle from the former political structures. Earlier these were bodies in the Soviet Communist Party and they performed the functions of the political party. The military-political bodies work now under the guidance of appropriate commanding officers and follow through the state policy in the area of security. The main thing for them is to carry out the tasks that were set by the day to day parliament and by the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR, which is our full parliament. They are responsible for the state of military discipline and moral fiber of the personnel. They ensure social justice in the troops. There are many legal problems. The process of creating military-political bodies is a largescale process, it requires retraining of specialists as well as the introduction of new ones - politilogists, lawyers and psychologists.

The colonel-general was then asked whether the acute domestic conflicts here lately may have worsened the attitude to the army, what was his view? [Ovchinnikov said]: I can cite thousands of examples when labor staffs of plants, enterprises and offices, and rural residents speak with great love about the armed forces and invite servicemen to their homes to convey their good feelings. The people still have a love for its army, and this is particularly pleasant for us, and at the same time we feel responsibility for the cause entrusted to us.

Military Figure on Media's 'Anti-Army Campaign'

LD2302232891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0845 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Colonel General Nikolay Ivanovich Shlyaga, head of the USSR Armed Forces Main Military-Political Directorate (voenno-politicheskogo upravleniya), by announcer Vyacheslav Rusinov; from the "Radar" program—live]

[Text] [Rusinov] Nikolay Ivanovich, our radio listeners have asked whether the complex processes taking place in the country today are affecting the combat readiness and combat capability of units and ships.

[Shlyaga] They are having an impact and a substantial one too. If one talks about a positive effect, then I will say quite bluntly, this is actually manifesting itself in a strengthening of the rights of military collectives, in development of independence of officer assemblies. This we regard as the start of the large amount of work on democratization of the whole complex of military service relations that is envisaged by the military reform currently being implemented. At the same time, one cannot fail to see the negative impact that some political parties, social movements, and organizations are striving to effect upon the armed forces. The army has never barricaded itself from all the difficulties that our country is experiencing. On the contrary, it has taken on the most responsible and dangerous tasks: servicemen have always, everywhere, been the first to throw themselves into eliminating the aftermath of accidents, sparing no effort, their health, and sometimes their lives, too, I would say, to alleviate the sufferings of their compatriots. Those are emergency situations, but in ordinary conditions, too, our Army tries to assume whatever burden of socioeconomic problems is within its powers, while not lessening its efforts to ensure its combat readiness.

[Rusinov] Nikolay Ivanovich, the majority of people have feelings of gratitude and respect for the Army. However, there is an evident anti-Army campaign in some mass media. In your view, what is the reason for this phenomenon?

[Shlyaga] I should like straightaway to separate two notions: Criticism of real shortcomings in the Army organism is one thing, and we are in favor of raising the issue in that way. But indiscriminate criticism of the Army and Navy, indiscriminately, is another matter, and we are against that sort of approach to our problems.

[Rusinov] In his recent television address, the country's president described the forthcoming referendum on the future of our union as being of vital importance for our state. Telegrams, letters, and telephone calls are coming in to the all-union radio editorial office. How did the men of the Army and Navy respond to this appeal? What is the majority opinion?

[Shlyaga] Just a few days ago, we conducted a poll of servicemen and members of their families in seven military districts on this issue. The results of the poll, I would say, speak for themselves: The majority, that is, more than three-quarters of those polled, is in favor of preserving the union and takes a positive view of the forthcoming referendum. Over 90 percent intend to participate in it.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our Soviet people and men of the Armed Forces on Soviet Army and Navy day and to wish them strong health, good fortune, stabilization of the situation in our country, and successful mastery of all the manifestations of crisis that have arisen on the path.

Alksnis Discusses Unity, Salvation Committee

LD2402000791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1521 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Colonel Viktor Imantovich Alksnis by correspondent Mikhail Markelov at Manezhnaya Square, Moscow, on 23 February; from the "Panorama" program—recorded]

[Text] [Markelov] In your interview to "Good Evening Moscow", you said that public support for the military gives you moral strength to continue your struggle.

[Alksnis] Yes. Yes, because I know that millions and millions of people, regardless of their nationality, understand what it could lead to if the events are going to develop in the same direction in which they are going now.

[Markelov] Viktor Imantovich, tell me please, do not you think that sometimes it is the people in grey uniforms themselves who are inflaming the situation.

[Alksnis] No, by no means so. The army is a guarantee of stability of the state, and the fact that today we see here people wearing grey uniforms is by no means a threat to democracy. In fact, it is the foundation of democracy.

[Markelov] Viktor Ivanovich, a common question, I suppose, concerning Lithuania. What do you think: When was Lithuania closer to democracy, under the rule of Communists, under the Sajudis rule, or under the rule of OMON [special purpose militia detachments]?

[Alksnis] I think the most...[changes thought] Lithuania was at its closest to democracy at the initial stage of perestroyka, that is, in the years 1987 and 1988. Then, it was really close. Today in Lithuania they have the same neo-Stalinism, only in this theory, in this doctrine of neo-Stalinism, the class struggle has been replaced by that of nationalities. The interests of the working class have been replaced by nationality interests, but it is still the same neo-Stalinism, and in the final account it will soon degenerate into fascism.

[Markelov] You have been talking of Gorbachev's resignation. Yeltsin also talks of Gorbachev's resignation. What is the difference?

[Alksnis] The difference? The thing is that we are representing somewhat opposite positions. Yeltsin needs Gorbachev's resignation to move from Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment to the Kremlin...

[Markelov, interrupting] And what do you think is the slogan of our time, of today? You are calling for moderation and moving away from radicalism. Is this right?

[Alksnis] Yes, I am now calling for unity. We need, all of us, to unite, the democrats and the conservatives.

[Markelov] Viktor Imantovich, you mentioned at our meeting the other day that you were among the members of the National Salvation Committee of Latvia. How do you explain this position of yours? Do you think it is quite justified and...

[Alksnis, interrupting] No, I have known from day one that this was adventurism, and I have been warning my friends that this was adventurism. I knew that this committee was illegal, but when my friends invited me, in that difficult situation I could not betray my friends, and so I joined them, although I knew from the first day that that was an illegal committee and that it was political adventurism.

[Markelov] Are you not afraid now of being held responsible for participation in the activities of the National Salvation Committee, an anticonstitutional body?

[Alksnis] No, I am not afraid.

Soyuz Leader Comments on Army's Political Role

LD2402154791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0743 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Soyuz co-chairman A.G. Chekhoyev by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Radar" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Chekhoyev] When we put forward, came out in support of the initiative to hold a festive, I stress the word festive, meeting on 23 February, we got in touch with the Ministry of Defenses and asked them what they thought about it. Naturally, they supported the idea, but the initiative for it did not come from the Army.

[Correspondent] Do you think that the Army should keep out of politics, or should it play an active part in the country's political affairs?

[Chekhoyev] I think that today the Army should concentrate all efforts on preserving the unity of our state, in the framework of the existing constitution, in the context of abiding by the military Oath.

Baltic Republics

Sajudis Warns of Impending Military Action

LD2202213891 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 22 Feb 91

[appeal by the Lithuanian Sajudis Secretariat]

[Text] Dear people of Lithuania. Yedinstvo is once more planning to hold a demonstration tomorrow, 23 February. Anxious news is heard again that experts are to arrive from Moscow, just as they did prior to the bloody events in Baku [word indistinct] and that the Sajudis shock troops will attack the northern hamlet again.

We have received information that volunteer units are being armed in certain enterprises. They [word indistinct] may even portray Sajudis shock troops. A military meeting and protest demonstrations against the democratic forces will be held in Moscow at the same time. [Word indistinct] it may be [word indistinct] of possible agreement and we can all see perfectly well the deepening conflict between Yeltsin and Gorbachev. A new military action may commence [words indistinct].

The Polish newspaper GAZETA WYBORCZA is predicting that presidential rule will take effect from 24 February. The situation is becoming similar to that at the beginning of January.

For this reason we exhort all Lithuanian people to be especially vigilant and restrained during these days—that has saved us more than once.

We invite everyone to attentively follow radio announcements on 23 February.

We remind you that the Sajudis Information Agency will be on duty on a 24-hour basis. Its telephone numbers are : 22-48-96 and 22-49-09.

This is the Lithuanian Sajudis Secretariat.

Vilnius Rally Shows Support for Soviet Troops

LD2302220891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] A thousands-strong rally defending the political and social rights of Soviet troops was held today in the Lithuanian capital. It demonstrated vividly that the majority of the people in the republic have great respect for the defenders of the homeland. The speakers mentioned the great role assigned to the troops in defending Soviet power in Lithuania and the rights of its citizens. The rally participants adopted a resolution containing demands for the repeal of all legal acts that encroach on the rights of servicemen and their families and the cessation of all provocations against the military garrison, monuments, and the burial places of soldiers and officers who fell in battles to liberate the republic from the fascist occupiers. [Video shows demonstrators holding banners in Russian that read "Yes to a united union," "The People and the Army are united," and "No to the USSR's disintegration!" One banner in Lithuanian reads "Yes to the referendum"]

Army Day Meeting 'Circus'

LD2302120391 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent Aras Luksas]

[Text] Saturday is a day of rest, there is no plenary sitting at the Supreme Council building—the majority of the deputies devote this day to meetings with their constituents. Today is like other Saturdays, only the mood of the day of rest is marred by the fact that it coincides with the Soviet Army Day celebrated in a neighboring country. Of course, it is marred not by Army Day itself, but by the fact that some forces are organizing meetings in Lithuania as well, to honor the army which committed bloody crimes on 13 January.

An unsanctioned meeting devoted to Soviet Army Day is now taking place in front of the Vilnius Sports Palace. It takes place regardless of protests by workers at the Sport Palace, and this is not the first time this has happened. Meanwhile, a performance: Circus on Ice is taking place in the palace itself. We thus have a circus today on both sides of the walls of the palace.

Soviet Soldiers Termed 'Invaders'

LD2302161691 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Today is USSR Army and Navy Day. There is nothing wrong with the military of the Soviet Union celebrating their professional holiday. After the January events in Lithuania, however, when the Army was used against unarmed people, officers and veterans adorned with battle awards do not provoke admiration.

People gathered at noon at the Sports Palace in Vilnius were possibly protesting against the use of the glorious Soviet Army in a purely political game—maybe they were indignant that the army has become in our time a tool of the CPSU in the internal political struggle? By no means. Accusations addressed to Lithuania's leadership were echoing once again that the soldiers of the Soviet Army were, as before, called invaders, that the Russians were being persecuted. [passage omitted]

The radio correspondent wanted to talk to soldiers, ask their attitude to the law adopted by the Lithuanian Supreme Council forbidding attacks on the army and on servicemen, but how could he? Three young fellows shouted: Which radio are you from? When they were told that this was the radio of independent Lithuania, they said: We are waiting for representatives of Moscow radio. Calling the correspondent a provocateur and adding unpublishable epithets, these fellows dressed in civilian clothes threatened: "Get out from here, or else".

The correspondent noted that there were fewer people at the Sport Palace than [passage indistinct]. A substantial part of them were servicemen dressed in civilian clothes [passage indistinct].

Vigilantes Established in Vilnius Factories

LD2402121191 Vilnius International Service in English 2300 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Early in the morning some alarming news was broadcast by the independent Lithuanian radio station. The Sajudis Executive Council warned the residents of Vilnius that a group of experts from Moscow had once again arrived in the Lithuanian capital and reminded the audience that a similar delegation had reportedly been to Vilnius prior to the events of 13 January. The Sajudis Executive Council also announced that special vigilante groups consisting of basically Russian-speaking people were being set up in the Moscow-controlled factories and plants in Vilnius. This is indeed a dangerous sign.

Lithuania Sets Terms for Moscow Talks

PM2202111991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Correspondent N. Lashkevich report: "Proposals on Talks With USSR Adopted"]

[Text] Vilnius—Proposals from the Lithuanian legislature to the USSR Supreme Soviet on the question of bilateral talks were adopted Tuesday at a plenary session of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet.

As we know, the composition of the Lithuanian state delegation to the talks is the same as before, with a small exception. Specifically, the republic's new prime minister, G. Vagnorius, is a member of the delegation in place of K. Prunskiene, who is currently abroad.

The Lithuanian Supreme Soviet has proposed that the current relations between Lithuania and the USSR and the sides' positions at the forthcoming talks be made concrete. The USSR Supreme Soviet is asked to instruct the country's executive to return the buildings seized during the 11-13 January events, to make the appropriate assessment of the "illegal actions of the USSR Armed Forces, and to withdraw the repressive USSR Armed Forces, Internal Troops, and KGB troops from Lithuanian territory."

Judging by everything, these proposals are, as it were, terms for starting talks. For instance, Lithuanian Prime Minister G. Vagnorius noted in discussion with this IZVESTIYA correspondent that the start of the negotiating process will largely depend on what legal guarantees the Soviet side provides for the recognition of the Lithuanian state's independent status.

Delegation Views Talks With USSR

LD2202144991 Moscow TASS in English 1414 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Kazys Uscila]

[Text] Vilnius February 22 TASS—The Lithuanian delegation to talks with the Soviet Union announced this morning that the beginning of talks is "possible only after the Lithuanian radio and television, the Vilnius television tower and other illegally seized objects are returned to their legal owners".

Forthcoming talks with the Soviet Union are the focus of the public's attention. Recently, local press reported that Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis received a letter from Soviet parliament Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov declaring the composition of the Soviet delegation for talks with Lithuania.

According to Lithuanian mass media, the fact that the composition of the delegation differed from that named in the Soviet president's decree of February 1 was puzzling.

According to the letter, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Komplektov and Soviet Deputy Interior Minister Nikolay Demidov were replaced in the delegation by First Deputy KGB Chief Viktor Grushko.

The independent Lithuanian radio today reported that Iceland's government proposed to mediate during talks between the Baltic states and the Soviet Union.

Sweden Rejects Diplomatic Ties With Lithuania

LD2102212691 Moscow TASS in English 2058 GMT 21 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Text] Stockholm February 21 TASS—Swedish authorities are not planning demarches, similar to the recognition of Lithuania by Iceland. This follows from a speech made by Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson on Wednesday [20 February] in the course of a parliamentary debate on foreign policy.

"Sweden sticks to a clear and firm principle, in accordance with which it recognises not governments, but countries. Three criteria should be observed in this respect—the presence of a territory, a nation and a government exercising sufficient control over the territory. The third one is absent in this case," he said. According to Andersson, "in the current situation it would be unreasonable" to follow Iceland's example and recognise Lithuania.

Andersson pointed out that Stockholm favoured serious talks between the central authorities and the Baltic republics in accordance with their democratically expressed striving for independence. Sweden is developing cooperation with the Baltic republics and promoting their contacts with the outside world.

Lithuania's Vagnorius on Price Reform

LD2402072891 Vilnius International Service in English 2300 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Speaking at a news conference today, Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius focused in great part on the [word indistinct] reforms and pricing policies and the monetary compensations, which would help the population cope with the new expenses. The prime minister said he would present his project on price reforms to parliament early next week.

As of this coming Monday, the compensation mechanism will start functioning. However, the government has not yet announced the precise details, or the concrete size of compensation, although on several occasions in the not too distant past, Mr. Vagnorius said that, in contrast to Prunskiene's cabinet, his government would pay compensations to the entire population, regardless of their income.

It has not yet been announced when the price rises will come into effect, but it is clear that this would take place in the immediate future.

The Lithuanian prime minster was also quoted as saying that the prices of consumer goods would be determined by the producers themselves, while the government would reserve the right to fix the maximum levels.

During these past few weeks, the prices of a number of consumer goods, such as children's clothes, furniture, refrigerators, footwear and fabrics have increased two or even four-fold.

Lithuanian CP Statement Defends Ideology Chief

PM2202152791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

["Own information" report: "New Stage of Arbitrariness"]

[Text] On 5 February 1991 the newspaper LIETUVOS AJDAS published an official report by the government news service, from which it followed that on 12 January 1991 the Lithuanian Republic General Prosecutor's Office had instituted criminal proceedings against J. Jermalavicius, head of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Ideological Department, under Article 68 of the Lithuanian Criminal Code "...for public appeals to violate the sovereignty of the Lithuanian state and violently overthrow state power."

The Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau has declared that the charges which have been brought are groundless and constitute a crude invention aimed at absolving the organizers and inspirers of the bloody events of 13 January 1991—Landsbergis and his entourage—of responsibility for them. Doctor of Historical Sciences Professor Juozas Jermalavicius, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Citizens Committee, has always decisively rejected and still rejects the use of force to achieve political ends.

The current action is nothing but a fresh attempt by the republic's present leadership to retaliate against the Lithuanian Communist Party and other democratic forces. This is attested by the actions of Landsbergis' repressive apparatus in Klaipeda, Prienai, Naujoji Vilnia, and other rayons and cities. They all stem from the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet's illegal acts adopted in violation of the Lithuanian SSR Constitution, the USSR Constitution, and the decisions of the Third Congress of USSR People's Deputies, which declared the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet's act of 11 March 1990 invalid. Seeking to impart a semblance of legality to the current repression, parliament altered in advance the wording of the corresponding chapter of the particular section of the Criminal Code providing for liability for state crimes. However, in accordance with the first part of Article 73 and Article 74 of the USSR Constitution and Article 2 of the Fundamentals of USSR and Union Republic Criminal Legislation, liability for state crimes is defined in all-Union laws which have identical force on the territory of all Union republics. And in the event of a discrepancy between a union republic law and an all-Union law, only the USSR law operates.

The Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau draws the attention of the public in the republic and the Soviet Union and of the entire world community to the fact that Landsbergis' grouping has initiated a new stage of confrontation in Lithuania—the criminal prosecution of political parties and citizens for their views and actions in defense of the USSR Constitution. Lithuania's separatist authorities have thereby once again confirmed the appraisal of their activity, made earlier by the Lithuanian Communist Party and the republic's democratic forces, as antidemocratic and aimed at infringing civil rights and human freedoms in the republic.

Lithuanian Television, Radio Status Viewed

91UN0908A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian No 7, Feb 91 p 8

[Untitled report of telephone conversation between B. Klevinskas, "one of the chief editors of Lithuanian Radio and Television," and A. Petrov]

[Text] **It was announced on the "Vremya" program that Lithuanian television was resuming operations. Our editorial office has been receiving letters and telephone calls from readers interested in the situation with respect to Lithuanian television and radio.**

ARGUMENTY I FAKTY received an official letter on "Lithuanian Radio and Television" stationery signed by B. Klevinskas and R. Yuditskas, chief editors of this

establishment, in which they report that local government is not controlling the television facility.

We phoned the telephone number indicated on the stationery, but it turns out that the employees who work here do not know any such directors. We were told that it was a group of technical personnel who were there, sent from USSR Gosteleradio [State Committee for Radio and Television Broadcasting] (prior to its reorganization).

All the same we managed to get through to B. Klevinskas by phone and obtain from him answers to readers' questions concerning which Central Television programs are being transmitted, in what languages they are presented, and who controls the radio and television operation of Lithuania:

I am in fact one of the chief editors of Lithuanian Television and Radio and was working in this position just prior to the well-known events.

The situation today with respect to television and radio remains the way it was after 12 January. Five armored personnel carriers are constantly located near the television facility. Soldiers and officers of the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] are around and within the building.

We are located on the premises of the Union of Journalists and are not allowed access to TV facilities. For the time being, the Kaunas program "Independent Lithuania" is being aired—for which we used to prepare broadcasts.

New people, people we do not know, are working at Vilnius television. They are using our programs and creative resources, but without any kind of coordination with us.

They are running the republic programming, including Russian language programming. This channel is controlled by the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee. But one of the announcers, a former colonel in the Soviet Army, is Lithuanian.

Over half the broadcasts of the television facility are being aired in Russian.

The first and second programs of Central Television are being transmitted, as is the Polish program—which, depending on what the current television facility personnel desire, is aired with arbitrary omissions. During our tenure, orienting ourselves on the results of population surveys, we rejected transmission of the Leningrad program and at the end of 1990 concluded a contract with the Poles. After all, Lithuania has many Poles and other inhabitants who are fluent in Polish.

At night the program of the U.S. network CNN is transmitted.

The situation with respect to radio is as follows. All the central airwaves are received, but military transmitters operate on arbitrary wave bands, interfering with Lithuanian broadcasting. Republic radio reports on a permanent basis from the republic Supreme Soviet. All the necessary equipment is located in the parliament building.

Lithuanian Ethnic Minorities Law Amended

91UN0933A Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 1 Feb 91 p 2

[Law signed by V. Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Council, in Vilnius on 29 January: "Law of the Lithuanian Republic: On Introducing Amendments to the Law of the Lithuanian Republic on Ethnic Minorities"]

[Text] The Supreme Council of the Lithuanian Republic resolves:

To enter the following amendments and additions into the Law of the Lithuanian Republic on Ethnic Minorities (1989 Register No. 34- 485):

1. Paragraph 4 of Article 2 shall be amended to read as follows:

"The right to instruction in their native language through the establishment of conditions for the existence of children's preschool institutions, classes, and general-education schools, as well as of groups, faculties, and branches in institutes of higher education which train educators, teachers, and other specialists necessary to satisfy the needs of ethnic communities;".

2. Article 4 shall be amended to read as follows:

"Article 4. In local establishments and organizations of administrative-territorial entities where any certain ethnic minority is concentrated, the language of this ethnic minority (local language) is used along with the state language."

3. Article 5 shall be amended to read as follows:

"Article 5. Written notices, informational in nature in the administrative-territorial entities mentioned in Article 4, may be effected in the language of the ethnic minority (local language) along with the Lithuanian language."

4. Article 7 shall be amended to read as follows:

"Article 7. Social and cultural organizations of ethnic minorities may establish cultural and educational institutions using their own funds. The state provides support to establishments and organizations designed to satisfy the cultural and educational needs of citizens."

5. Article 9 shall be amended to read as follows:

"Article 9. Social and cultural organizations of ethnic minorities are instituted, operate, and terminate their activity according to procedure as established by law."

[Signed] V. Landsbergis, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian Republic
Vilnius, 29 January 1991

'Many Thousands' Attend Riga Army Rally

LD2302144191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Information on the celebration of Soviet Army and Navy Day continues to come in.

Today in Riga, a demonstration of many thousands took place, beginning with wreath-laying at the Lenin and Latvian riflemen monuments. Then a column of many thousands, headed by a a guard of honor, went through the city's streets and across the Daugava. Here, at the monument to the liberators of Latvia and its capital, a rally was held.

Anatoliy Gorbunovs, chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet, sent greetings to soldiers and officers of the Baltic Military district, veterans of the USSR Armed Forces, and soldiers of the military reserve, which says in part:

We will always remember with gratitude the Soviet soldiers, together with the anti-Hitler coalition, which defeated fascism.

OMON Calls for Return to 'Old Order'

LD2302152891 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1200 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] A meeting devoted to the Soviet Army and Navy Day took place today at Pardaugava in Riga. A few thousand men dressed in uniforms and private citizens participated. Because there are many thousands of both active army officers and pensioned officers in Riga, and its vicinity, it cannot be said that the undertaking was well attended, even with regard to the number of officers' family members.

What could be said abut the character of the meeting? In many places the YEDINSTVO newspaper was sold and donations to the Interfront were collected.

Arrival of armed OMON [Special Purpose Militia Unit] men, even before the column of the participants of the meeting came, was significant.

There were slogans, for example: People's Front of Latvia—hands off the OMON!; Soviet Army—Do not allow runaways! There were catchwords against Gorbunovs and Godmanis. Old flags and names, for example, Kirova Rayon, were displayed. Inscriptions which would support perestroyka and Gorbachev were not seen, however. Calls were made for a return to the old order and the former symbols of power, and the names of Riga rayons given by the Communist Party. This could perhaps mean a return to the times of Brezhnev, and, it is possible, even to earlier times.

'Foreign Army' Festivities Noted

LD2302120291 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1000 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Today is 23 February. Formerly on this day, we marked the Soviet Army and Navy Day. At the present moment these are the festivities of a foreign army on the territory of the Republic of Latvia. A few thousand people have gathered at a meeting. We will try to inform you of its proceedings in one of the next news broadcasts.

Army Day 'Battles' Predicted

LD2202231591

[Editorial Report] Riga Domestic Service in Latvian at 1400 GMT on 22 February carries a 3-minute recording of remarks made by journalist Peteris Tabuns concerning Soviet Army Day. He says that he did not intend speaking to the listeners today, but could not leave a few words unspoken on "how the defenders of Soviet totalitarianism in Latvia are getting ready for Soviet Army Day, tomorrow." Everybody knows there will be a pompous gathering at the Lenin monument in Riga, and an even more pompous march to Pardaugava, to the monument to the liberators of Riga, he says. He then reads from today's NOVOSTI RIGI: "You will walk in silence, as you once went into attack to the fascist positions, although this march is also an attack. An attack upon the same fascism, only draped a little in a brown toga of pseudodemocracy.

He continues: "This is what Captain Third Rank (Rifkin) writes in today's NOVOSTI RIGI: We know there is no lack of such people here as (Rifkin), who has already turned the barrel of the submachine gun against the freedom of Latvia. But it is sad that also the editorial office of this newspaper thinks like that, and, it appears, also the organizers of these festivities, because, how otherwise could such words of threat be put on the front page of the newspaper, in the most prominent place."

He asks: "What can we conclude from this? That this march and this meeting tomorrow will not be a moment of festivity marking Army Day. It will not be a moment of remembrance for those who fell, but will be a regular rattling of weapons, with threats and lamentations directed against the legislature and government of Latvia, against the Latvian people."

He continues: "So, in the words of Captain Third Rank (Rifkin), the veterans are going into battle against fascism. But what these people mean by the word fascists is well known. "He goes on to say: "But for this battle, Riga workers, soldiers, members of military schools, will attend. Many, many others are being organized. The organizers hope for 20,000 demonstrators in the streets of Riga. We will see how many there will be. So, whether we want to or not, we must understand that they are all being prepared for an attack, as yet without weapons, but for an attack, for a regular attempt for a more proper attack with armed units of workers, with the Black Berets in the ranks, and so on, and so forth. This is dangerous.

He ends by saying: "It appears to me that in this regular Soviet Army Day's gathering, law-enforcement bodies should be present so they can register just how the day is marked with festivities, and how much with incitement to hatred—and then take the appropriate action."

Latvia Begins Polling on Referendum 24 Feb

LD2402150991 Moscow TASS in English 1449 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[Text] Riga February 24 TASS—One thousand and four hundred polling stations opened in Latvia today, where people, who for different reasons cannot go to the polls on March 3, will decide whether to say "yes" or "no" to Latvia's independence.

Newspaper headings and posters are urging people to say "yes" to Latvia's independence. Posters released in workers' collectives insist on "no", arguing that once Latvia secedes from the USSR, the lot of displaced people will befall many of the republic's residents.

The clash of the two viewpoints will last till March 3—a 500-rouble fine is to be imposed for agitation on the day of the poll. This decision was made by the republican parliament. It also ruled that all those found of violating the vote secrecy and forging documents will be penalised by the imprisonment of up to three years or a fine amounting to 15,000 roubles.

Although the draft of a document defying the Union referendum was distributed among deputies, it remained the draft. Deputy chairman of the republican parliament Andreis Krastyns clarified that Latvia did not have any relation to the USSR's internal affairs. However, if Union structures on the republican territory try to stage such a referendum, the reaction of the Supreme Soviet would follow.

In these conditions, the reaction of another parliament—the USSR legislature—and the Soviet president is awaited by many of those residents of the republic who regard as their inelienable right to express their opinion on the destiny of the USSR on March 17.

Representatives of several foreign states and international organisations were invited to Latvia to observe the poll. Almost all parties and movements in Latvia are also preparing to monitor the poll because there were quite a number of abuses during the past elections.

The opposition group in parliament Ravnopraviye [Equal Rights] reported that people were already sending protests against dissidents being excluded from election commissions. "This work is conducted with the connivance of the Central Commission and at the initiative of several local governing councils," the group emphasised in its address to the residents.

Gorbunovs on Poll, Yeltsin

LD2302141191 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1830 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Remarks by Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Latvian Supreme Council chairman, at a meeting with residents in Salaspils on 22 February; Gorbunovs speaks in Latvian and in Russian—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Gorbunovs, in Latvian] It is being asked here about the USSR referendum, whether this referendum would not influence the 3 March poll, because the army will participate in this USSR referendum. Such is the question.

I think that the question in the 3 March poll in the Republic of Latvia appears to be quite a correct one, and quite a specific one. Concerning USSR citizens, if they want in one or another way to participate in the USSR referendum, that is their choice. The institutions of our state are organizing the poll on 3 March. [passage omitted]

[Gorbunovs, in Russian] The role of Boris Nikolayevich is that of a general at a wedding feast. I will briefly tell you my opinion. I saw Boris Nikolayevich's position first at the CPSU Central Committee Plenum when he...[changes thought] It was at the time when...[changes thought] The hall was about the same as this one, with no fewer people there than there are here at a plenum, and he alone, literally a lone figure, went against the whole hall in the way he was feeling and thinking, and so on. Of course the first thing I thought was that he was a very courageous person. To some extent, of course, I had some suspicions, let me be frank, of some sort of populism, perhaps. I did have such a thought. I can say only this. I often I meet him in the Federation Council, or in the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, and I can say that on all the burning questions of the Union—and not simply whether the Union should exist or not, but how specific problems of the Union are to be solved—Boris Nikolayevich and his helpers had constructive programs. How to fulfill them is another question.

They included the 500 days program. Latvia took part in the elaboration of this program. It is just that there was disinformation about it. Boris Nikolayevich and his team have this program, and in my opinion it is quite constructive. Which, unfortunately, is not always the case with the central government.

That is my attitude to Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. Whether he is a general at the wedding feast I do not know. As for the sharpness of his speech, well, everyone here speaks as he considers necessary.

As for the question as to whether he will remain in power, and what will happen to the russophone population as far as the treaty we signed is concerned, it seems to me that of course personalities decide a lot, but today constructive program decide a lot. If there is a constructive program, one group of officials grasp at them and so does the other, whether they are in power or leaving it, the next one continues with it. If there is nothing constructive, then no popularity can maintain this program. This treaty, I believe, does have a constructive basis, as I have tried to describe for you to some extent.

If he is removed from power, will Latvia give him political asylum? I think that there are now living in Latvia, well, according to our figures, at least 30 percent, or even more, Russians, and I think that the Russian community in Latvia, which now belongs to the Democratic Party and so on, I think they will decide where it is better for Boris Nikolayevich in such a case. (?Do as you should). [passage omitted]

Baltic Command To Insure Referendum in Jurmala

LD2102202391 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1830 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] In Jurmala today the electors met the commander-in-chief of the Baltic Military District, Fedor Kuzmin. More than 300 people participated in the meeting which was held at the club of the Majori military sanatorium. veterans of the Great Fatherland War, labour veterans and for the most part people of the older generation predominated in the hall.

In his address to the electors Fedor Kuzmin described the political situation in Latvia. he said that the deputies Dobelis, Dinevics, Krastins, and others are ardent nationalists [yaryye natsionalisty]. Comrade Kuzmin expressed his attitude toward the "Shield" organization of former military persons and the speech yesterday by Boris Yeltsin on central television.

After that he answered the questions put by those present. Asked what the city intends to do in ensuring the 17 March USSR referendum, Fedor Kuzmin promised to inform the Kremlin that the city of Jurmala is not preparing to organize this referendum, and he expressed the probability that it will be insured by the Baltic Military District.

Other matters were also discussed. Fedor Kuzmin said that since students are no longer called up into the army, it has become the army of workers and peasants.

Kuzmin Welcomes Contacts With Latvians

LD2202154591 Moscow TASS in English 1517 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga February 22 TASS—"It is time to pick up the stones that were hurled at the army. We welcome relations between local government bodies and servicemen that have taken shape lately," Colonel-General Fedor Kuzmin, commander of the troops of the Baltic Military District, said on Latvian television on Thursday evening, evaluating the situation in the republic.

He thinks that contacts between the military district commanders and the Latvian parliament and government are acquiring a businesslike nature. But suspending the enforcement of several acts that affect the vital interests of servicemen and their family members is only a half-way solution to the problem. It is necessary that the unconstitutional resolutions of the republican parliament and government be cancelled, Kuzmin said.

The military district commanders are treating with respect the Latvian people's desire to ensure a worthy future for themselves. "but we categorically reject that the lofty ideas of democracy, sovereignty and independence must be implemented by shunning the Soviet constitution and infringing on the rights and social guarantees of a considerable part of the republic's population, including servicemen," Kuzmin said.

He cited an example of the Latvian parliament's law-making activity in which servicemen were denied the right to participate in the forthcoming republican poll of the population.

Kuzmin told journalists that an attempt was made on Thursday evening to detain his car when it drove to the building of the television centre.

In Kuzmin's view, this action by armed civilians, whose membership in any organisation was impossible to find out, was aimed to thwart his speech on television or to provoke a clash with servicemen. Kuzmin sent a request to the Latvian parliament in connection with this incident.

Details Harassment at TV Center

PM2202191591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Irina Litvinova report: "Incident at Television Center"]

[Text] Riga—On 22 February Colonel General F. Kuzmin, commander of the Baltic Military District and USSR people's deputy, sent a deputy's inquiry to the Latvian leadership in connection with the anticonstitutional actions committed by a group of people near the Latvian television center.

Kuzmin told representatives of the media the details of what happened the night before, 21 February:

"On 21 February, as agreed with the leadership of Latvian television, I was to address the inhabitants of the republic. At around 1930 we drove up to the television center building. There were four of us in the car—although I have the right to an escort, I try to do without any additional protection so as not to make situations more tense. Two armed civilians came toward us. They stopped our car. My assistant, a colonel, got out to explain that the person in the car was a USSR people's deputy and the district commander, and that he was to appear on television in 20 minutes. They did not let us go, and behaved in a defiant manner. I myself got out and asked for an explanation as to who these people were and why they were not letting our car past. They did not present any identification. We were almost late, but we managed to get to the entrance of the building. Here we met a group of people who behaved crudely and insultingly in a clear attempt to provoke us. But in the end I managed to make my speech.

"How do I assess what happened? This was possibly an attempt to stop my speech, or maybe to provoke some kind of conflict, and it is not out of the question that it was to involve the use of weapons. I have written a deputy's inquiry to the republic leadership about these unconstitutional actions that do not have any legal basis."

Estonia, Iceland Premiers Sign Joint Statement

LD2202125391 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 0700 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent Ain Saarna in Reykjavik, including recorded remarks by Estonia Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar, place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Saarna] The official visit of the Republic of Estonia governmental delegation to the Republic of Iceland is coming to an end. We have in front of us a freshly signed joint statement by the Republic of Iceland prime minister and the Republic of Estonia prime minister, with the two signatures. Edgar Savisaar, chairman of the Republic of Estonia Government—this fresh document should now be summed up.

[Savisaar] We decided to present the final document as a joint statement of two prime ministers. [passage omitted] It is indeed a document with some content, and I would like to highlight the following points. First, it is demonstrated that the Baltic problem can be viewed within the political context of World War II. Even if great changes have recently taken place in Europe, they have not influenced the Baltic problem, the Baltic crisis, toward a resolution. This means that right from the beginning, both sides gave the assessment that this is not an internal USSR matter, but an international problem.

Another significant assessment provided here is that within nearly a year—despite all the efforts on the part of the Baltic states—there has not been any success in starting talks with the USSR. There is an essential reference also as to why this is so, and hence there is a conclusion drawn in the document that another path is required to resolve the Baltic issue: namely, to endeavor through bilateral talks between Moscow and the Baltics to reach an international solution. Several references follow to describe the process: how, indeed, the Baltics should attain independence.

I referred to this also at the news conference that in fact it was an Icelandic-Estonian, or Estonian-Icelandic—how should one word it—plan for achieving Baltic independence. It is not a case of isolated actions; we attempted to analyze the process—how, step by step, with the help of what kind of mechanisms, it would be at all possible to achieve Baltic independence. The statement also contains references to this. There are references to the need for international guarantees and agreements, etc. But we do not as yet consider it necessary to reveal the whole process, because it calls for coordination and discussion with other states, too.

The second half of the statement is devoted to organizing talks. In it Iceland expresss readiness to act as a mediator. This is, in essence, in response to the message that we brought along here, to Iceland, signed by Arnold Ruutel and the government. In it we raised the issue of mediation. Now we want to coordinate the agreement that we have just signed with Hermannsson, to coordinate it with both the Latvian and Lithuanian leaderships. It is shown here that we consider consultations to be the first step within the mediator's role. Iceland plans to carry out those, first with the Baltic governments, and to do this in March—or more precisely, somewhere between 15 and 20 March. Consultations with the other side would follow thereafter. In essence the key problem of the first step is how to achieve it so that the other side will also come to the talks table.

The third section concerns direct relations, and its main content is that Iceland considers it necessary to open—well, what should we call it—an information center or information bureau in Tallinn. [passage omitted]

Iceland Plans To Open Bureau in Estonia

LD2502091291 Moscow TASS in English 0902 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Sidorov]

[Text] Copenhagen February 25 TASS—Iceland plans to open a new bureau in Tallinn in the nearest future to establish closer links with the Baltic republics, the RITZAUS bureau Danish agency reported on Sunday.

The decision was taken during Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar's visit to Reykjavik on February 22.

The sides pledged to promote cooperation with the Baltic republics in all spheres.

Iceland also offered to act as mediator at talks between the Soviet Union, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

Representatives from the three Baltic republics plan to hold a meeting in Reykjavik in March to discuss this proposal, RITZAUS bureau reports.

Savisaar Addresses Independence Day Celebration

LD2402185991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Independence Day is being marked today in Estonia. Our correspondent Heymar Lenk reports.

[Lenk] A formal rally dedicated to this day was held in the (?upper town) at the foot of the Long Hermann Tower on which the dark blue, black, and white state flag of Estonia is raised each day at sunrise. The head of the republic's government, Edgar Savisaar, in his speech touched on the history of the Estonia acquired its own statehood for the first time in its long history. Soviet Russia was the first to recognize Estonia as an autonomous and independent state.

Rallies and demonstrations were held all over the republic today, as well as church services and concerts of church music. A formal celebration was held in Tallinn devoted to this important historical date in the life of the Estonian people.

Estonian Poll on Republic Status Held 24 Feb

LD2402123291 Moscow TASS in English 1215 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Yevgeniy Kapov and Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[Text] Sillamyae February 24 TASS—Residents of the city of Sillamyae came to seven polling stations today to answer the question on whether they wanted sovereign Estonia to remain within the USSR.

Sillamyae, the first of the three cities in the north-east of the republic where the Russian-speaking population predominantly lives, began fulfilling the decision by the joint session of the municipal councils of Kokhtla-Yarve, Narva and Sillamyae to conduct a poll in the run-up to the republican referendum.

On March 3, residents of Estonia, except servicemen, will be proposed to answer a question, which, it is believed here, was formulated ambiguously. The question reads as follows "Do you want a restoration of the Estonian Republic's state independence?"

Festive music sounded on Sillamyae streets this morning. State flags of the USSR and the Estonian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] are flying over houses. Over ten per cent of all participants in the survey came to ballot boxes virtually an hour after polling stations opened. Among them were servicemen doing military service on the territory of the three Estonian cities. The joint session of the three municipal councils stated that the poll was conducted in line with the USSR Constitution.

Majority in Sillamaye Support Union

LD2502082691 Moscow TASS in English 0814 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[Text] Sillamaye February 25 TASS—Eighty-nine per cent of poll participants in the Estonian city of Sillamaye situated in northeastern Estonia said on Sunday [24 February] that Estonia must be part of the Soviet Union. Chairman of the city Electoral Commission Tatiyana Tsepeleva told TASS that 83 per cent of city's residents participated in polling at seven city electoral precincts.

Sillamaye was the first among the three cities in north-eastern Estonia with predominant Russian-speaking population to fulfill a decision by the joint session of the city councils of Kokhtla-Jarve, Narva, and Sillamaye about polling the population on the eve of a republican referendum.

Troops stationed in the three cities also participated in the plebiscite, according to a decision by the joint session of the three city councils. The session stated that the poll is conducted in compliance with the Soviet Constitution.

Authorities in the three cities believe that residents of Estonia, who will participate in the referendum on March 3 (the military are not permitted to participate), will have to answer an ambiguous question: "Do you want the restoration of Estonia's state independence?"

Estonian Communists Offer Alternative Poll

LD2202235891 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] According to a resolution of Narva, Kohtla-Jarve, and Sillamae town councils, and supported by the Presidium of the Interregional Council and the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Estonia (on CPSU platform) Central Committee an [alternative] population poll will take place in Estonia. One will have to answer the question—Do you want the sovereign Estonia to remain within the composition of the USSR?—with a yes or no. The commission organizing the referendum-cum-poll is headed by Nikolay Zakharov, secretary of the CP of Estonia (CPSU) Central Committee. According to what he says many people support the idea of Estonian independence while wanting the republic to still remain within the USSR economic and political integration. The poll will be organized in order to find the people who think this way. In places where local authorities have supported the poll being organized the poll will take place in existing constituencies and polling stations. Elsewhere public organizations have taken the matter upon themselves and in that case the time for carrying out the poll will be extended until 17 March.

In Tallinn and in other towns constituencies will be set up according to the production principle [according to where people work]. The poll will be carried out also in Tapa, Parnu, Valga, Tartu, along the Peipus coast—in a word, everywhere where a request has been made.

Servicemen To Participate

LD2302233991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1945 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Here is a BALTFAX report: Savisaar, Estonian Government chairman, sent a telegram to USSR Prime

Minister Pavlov in which he said that servicemen in Estonia intend to participate in an alternative referendum for preserving the USSR. Savisaar notes that they have been ordered to prepare this referendum and that it is an attempt to use the army for tackling political issues.

Estonia Invites 30 Countries for Referendum

LD2202230991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Tallinn. The Estonian Government has sent invitations to the heads of government of 30 countries requesting them to send representatives of their states to the republic by the beginning of the referendum which is scheduled for 3 March.

According to the information office of the Estonian Republic's Foreign Ministry, agreement has already been expressed by the European Parliament, the European Council, and the Council of Northern Countries.

Estonia's Savisaar on Upcoming Referendum

PM2402151791 Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 20 Feb 91 p 8

[Report on undated Stockholm interview with Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar by Ingvar Oja: "We Are Voting for the West's Sake"]

[Text] In a little over a week Estonia will hold a referendum on the country's independence. Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar does not rule out provocations from the Soviet central authorities which could disturb the peaceful vote.

The central government in Moscow has declared the referendum illegal, and there are ever-present fears of some form of violence breaking out.

"I do not think that we will be able to hold the referendum peacefully," Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar said during a short stopover in Stockholm en route for Iceland, where he will pay his first official visit.

Savisaar did not go into detail about his fears of an outbreak of violence, but said:

"I feel it intuitively. Our decision to hold a referendum came as a surprise to Moscow, and so far the central government has not tested us in Estonia. That is why we are not ruling out provocations," said Savisaar, alluding to the Soviet military outrages in Vilnius and Riga.

He said that the central government could very well try to use the same methods in Estonia it used in Latvia. There the notorious Black Berets attacked the Latvian Interior Ministry. The reason given for the attack was that the wife of a Soviet officer had been brutally raped.

"However, it is doubtful whether the woman ever existed. Before I left Tallinn I again called the Latvian public prosecutor's office, and the woman had still not been found by anyone."

There is no uncertainty about the outcome of the 3 March referendum. An absolute majority of Estonians will vote for independence, and according to Savisaar, support among the Russians in Estonia has also grown recently. He also said that separatist feelings among the Russians in northeastern Estonia have been exaggerated. Moscow will arrange its own referendum there before the Estonian referendum. Nevertheless Savisaar does not think there will be a Russian "breakaway."

"Once Estonia has become a free and independent country these Russians too will become loyal citizens."

If the Estonian Government is so convinced of the outcome of the referendum, why hold it?

"We do not need it, but we are holding it for your sakes," Savisaar said. "Many people in the West have swallowed Mikhail Gorbachev's assertions that it is only a small group of separatists and nationalists who want independence. That is why the referendum is necessary."

Prime Minister Savisaar also gave another reason.

"We do not know how long the present institutions will continue to exist and the referendum is necessary so that a future [Estonian] government—perhaps sympathetic to the views of central government—will not become Moscow's tool. In the future no one can ignore the will of the people as expressed in a referendum."

Edgar Savisaar's visit to Iceland is a return visit, but has naturally been influenced by Iceland's diplomatic recognition of Lithuania. Savisaar views this recognition as directed not only toward Lithuania. The other Baltic countries too view this recognition as encouragement and support.

"Iceland has also expressed its willingness to mediate between the Baltic region and Moscow," said Savisaar, who views this offer as an important element in a necessary "internationalization" of the Baltic countries' struggle for total independence.

He hopes that Icelandic recognition will be the beginning of a chain reaction. But, asked about Swedish recognition, he replied diplomatically and laconically:

"Sweden clearly has not yet ended its recognition of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, which no longer exists."

RSFSR

Extraordinary RSFSR Congress To Convene 28 Mar

LD2202174291 Moscow TASS in English 1715 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The third extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies will begin in Moscow on March 28. The decision was taken by the Russian parliament today.

The parliament Presidium was instructed to prepare and submit to the parliament the congress's agenda. It is expected to include a report by Russian President Boris Yeltsin on the political, social and economic situation in the Russian Federation and measures to move out of the crisis. The congress is also expected to discuss the Russian Federation's national and state system and the Union treaty.

The demand to convene the highest organ of state power in the federation was supported by more than 270 people's deputies. They explained their action by the critical situation in Russia.

Yeltsin's recent television interview, when he demanded that president Mikhail Gorbachev "immediately resign" and all power in the country be transferred to the Federation Council still aggravated the situation. The statement was sharply criticised by many people's deputies of the republic, including some members of the parliament Presidium.

The Congress of People's Deputies is the supreme body of state power in the republic. It was formed last year after all-republican direct, equal and universal elections by secret ballot on an alternative basis.

Over 1,060 people's deputies are members of the congress. The congress adopts most important decisions concerning Russia's state system and constitution. The congress also elects the Russian Federation's supreme leaders.

Silayev: Voronin Suggested He Must Resign

LD2202210691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1630 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Speech by Ivan Stepanovich Silayev, chairman of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, RSFSR, Council of Ministers, at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 22 February--recorded]

[Text] Esteemed comrade people's deputies! This may be my last speech. I must tell you...

[Session chairman Khasbulatov interrupts] Let's not be pessimistic!

[Silayev] Esteemed comrades, I have the right to say what I think needs to be said. I want to say a few words once again about this unbridled campaign. I wish to say that a shameful campaign is being waged against the government elected by you. I have some informtion to give you. I ask you to listen to it. I will not refer to any secret papers. I will not cite any suspect or dubious statements. I will cite statistics. They concern the conclusion of import contracts for the year 1991 by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations. I am talking about the first quarter [of the year] compared with the first quarter of last year. [shouting in the hall] I ask you not to interrupt me. [shouting continues]

[Khasbulatov] Please don't interrupt him.

[Silayev] So...

[Khasbulatov] Please don't interrupt him.

[Silayev] So, the amount of raw materials and semifinished products purchased for the first quarter is 0.67 percent of the quantity purchased during the first quarter of last year. I think you will see why mills and factories in the light and textile industries are at a standstill. I stress that the figure is 0.67 percent, if you take last year's deliveries during the first quarter as 100. There is virtually no raw material, no dye, no semifinished materials of other kinds. I believe that representatives of these industries are present here. I do not believe that they are ignorant of this state of affairs. Take grain: The figure is 17 percent of last year's level. Only a million [tonnes] has been bought for us. Through our own efforts—and you may also demand to know where we got the money—acting independently, we purchased 3.5 million tonnes from Canada. This has already gone up to 4 million tonnes. Oil-seed meal: The lack of this is causing cattle and poultry to die right now. The figure is 27.5 percent of last year's level; Vegetable oil: 1.7 percent of last year's level; Sugar: 5.6 percent, and so on.

We anticipated this. We knew that the central government was unable to make purchases in the same way as before. I am not saying that I wish to make accusations against it right now. But this is precisely the state of affairs. These figures prove it. They range from 0 to 2, to 3, to 10 percent at the most.

And so we are without foodstuffs, we are without grain, we are without food for livestock, we are without sugar and we are without butter. Did our government have the right to view this without concern and not to take any measures at all? I consider that we did not have this right.

Incidentally, I received a note yesterday, a very interesting one, which proposes...from a commission of the Supreme Soviet...which proposes that the issue be considered, that things be done, that we feed the people. Such a letter exists—it is true that I have forgotten it but if it is necessary I will bring it, on request—which promises us throughout the course of five year, every year, to provide a growth of 8 kg for each head of the Russian population. For this, it is considered that 1.5 billion rubles [R] are required. The calculation is simple and says the following: To achieve an increase of 40 kg over five years, 1.5 billion a year are required and not 1.5 billion over five years.

Naturally, I will not concern myself with this personally, irrespective of whether the current composition of the Russian Government continues in existence or not. For this is forbidden to us, for we are under such pressure and under such suspicion that we do not have any opportunity of acquiring even a few kopecks in hard currency to resolve these issues.

I refute any accusations which are falling and continue to fall on our government, using unworthy methods, when

300 billion [rubles] were referred to in the latest editions of the newspapers, when such a fabrication is carried that the indignant officials of the apparatus carry piles of governmental correspondence to the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper's editorial office, including photocopies of my letter to Comrade Yeltsin...I do not know of it being the case anywhere in the world that official correspondence of any sort is the subject of constant attention and review by the mass media.

And now for the crux of the matter. I am not defending my own highest competence, especially as I am not a specialist in legal affairs. But I shall permit myself doubts about whether the people in the commission which is carrying out this work are absolutely competent in the juridical, legal, and financial spheres. Would it not have been better, nonetheless, to put forward these materials from the very beginning—and we still have materials and I am not afraid to put them forward—which could have been analyzed and about which it could have been said: What do we have here? Either some kind of premeditated and criminal actions or completely normal actions with the exception there, let us say, of the choice of partners which one really should understand in good time—and I have said this. And all the figures here about 300 billion, about 140 billion, these fantasies about how many trains would be needed in order to carry all of this, well I am sorry but this is, nonetheless—I would say—the sick fancy of some kind of extreme theoreticians. I have certificates, the conclusions of experts about what the credit line is, and credit and the credit line should not be confused.

It is known that even the largest credit line is being implemented in part with the help of a specific contract and each contract is being studied thorough separately, is being discussed, and then is joining a certain route. Maybe one-millionth of this credit line will be used. All the civilized world acts exactly in this way. And yet they accuse us of all sorts of machinations and come to twenty-fold or however many conclusions about me, which is an insult and nothing else. I categorically protest against it. And finally, not even one of those papers—complete or incomplete—carries or will carry—and I ask you to hand over those papers to experts, even to international ones, the most prominent ones in order to obtain their conclusion—not just economic but also political damage.

You have reproached, and rightly so in a way, the government here yesterday. But I cannot agree with some of you. But you are the judges, of course.

It has been said that the government has got everything. This was said by Boris Mikhaylovich Isayev. We were given everything, we were given extraordinary powers, and so on. But I think we have not really received anything to help us to work in a normal way. You demand local management from us. But if a chairman of an oblast soviet criticizes the government saying that the harvest situation is pretty bad, but at the same time he is working here and taking part in sittings for several months...[changes thought] It is a convenient position to criticize the government and ignore the situation in his own oblast, and demand that the crops should be harvested by the government, that the government should sow, reap, dig, and sell. I refer in particular to our esteemed Comrade Malkov whom I have met at least 20 times last year when the Chita Oblast was in trouble. I simply feel hurt that after such contacts and unlimited support I have to listen to such, I would say, peremptory formulation of a question.

But, nevertheless, I think that oblast leaders, any leaders, have more responsibility for what is happening in his oblast or his kray than the government has. You are saying that an agrarian program is being upset. I apologize, but could you tell me who prepared this agrarian program? We think—and of course, together with the Supreme Soviet—that it is a great achievement and attainment of both the Supreme Soviet and, I will allow myself say it, the government. I cannot agree with you reproaching us for not providing the implementation of this program in the localities. You might have another opinion, but my opinion is clear-cut: Local bodies—both legislative and executive—should carry out the most active work in order to implement this program in the localities. You have been working for a month, but you have not given us even one law which we can actively use as our guideline. I do not reproach you, comrades. But, after all, this is a fact.

Today we are not governing the local authorities and we have no right to do this according to the existing norms and regulations. If you could find the opportunity, in a short space of time, to adopt a law on local self-government and to restore the structure of the interaction of the executive bodies of state power, we would be grateful to you. Yet, at the present time, we consider that the absence of such a law binds us hand and foot.

What we have now is only some specific and personal possibilities to influence some or other local body of power. That is why I cannot agree that we have been given all the chances. And now I would like to speak on the last point, although you have had a critical approach to the words of Comrade Potchenko. But it is a fact, esteemed comrades, that five members of the Presidium—four of them are leading ministers—have become a target and an aim.

It is a fact that they had to spend several hours in the corridor and they were, as it is said, one by one invited for a detailed interrogation. This can be compared with the worst days of past years when a member of the Presidium was treated in such a way—not to mention that I don't see half of the members of the Presidium at the Presidium sessions because they are constantly reporting to and addressing commissions and committees and so on.

I have nothing against this. I understand that this should be done but I think that we do not deserve to be treated in such a way.

Now about the draft decisions. You are to decide what version should be adopted. But I do not agree to the criticisms that while being in such difficult circumstances, practically, in a desparate situation after the 500 days program was denounced—the criticisms are, I think, in paragraph two—instead of organizing the work we were involved in all sorts of machinations, and so on. I categorically disagree when four members of the government, besides Filshin, are being accused of not fulfilling some or other instruction of the chairman of the Council of Ministers. Excuse me, but this is our internal business. This issue is lumped together with everything else, as well as the request to fire Yaroshenko and there was also a version in which Comrade Fedorov was proposed to be fired. The issue in relation to decisively dealing with the foreign minister was put forward. What can the Presidium, including the chairman of the Council of Ministers, think of all this?

A social request for the elimination of the present composition of the Council of Ministers is being carried out. This is no idle talk on my part.

I will now tell you what I have heard with my own ears, and I will swear on whatever you like that I have heard it. A few days ago, in my office, it was suggested to me that I should resign. It was suggested to me that I should resign by one of the members of the commission, Comrade Voronin, Yuriy Mikhailovich. The following was said: That I must resign handsomely and that Comrade Voronin had been instructed to pass this on to me. You can ask Voronin about it. I am prepared to swear it on whatever you like: on the cross or a star, if you so wish. But this is what I have been told.

Proceeding from this, we, in such a situation, and feeling that where all this is leading cannot work [words indistinct] any longer. Either you give us at least a minimum chance to work and to implement your decisions and your will, and stop subjecting us to all manner of humiliating interrogations and insults, or you take another decision and...well, just take another decision. I, for my part, have been consulting today with the members of the Presidium... [corrects himself] of the Council of Ministers. We are prepared to carry on our work if minimum conditions are created for us. However, if everything is going to go on the way it is going now, we protest categorically because we cannot work under such conditions.

RSFSR Supreme Soviet 22 Feb Session

LD2202221491 Moscow TASS in English 2110 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 22 TASS—The Russian parliament today agreed to convene an emergency Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow on March 28.

The parliament also approved the first reading of an anti-monopoly bill, one of the key documents in a package to promote market relations.

The legislature continued the discussion of a probe into the deal to swap 140 billion rubles for seven billion dollars.

The Soviet Prosecutor's Office is investigating the deal. Members of a parliamentary commission studying the deal failed to come to an agreement and decided to continue work on a final resolution. Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev took the floor during the debate.

In an address to the parliament and Government of Georgia and people's deputies of South Ossetia, Russian parliamentarians expressed alarm over the situation in South Ossetia, calling on their colleagues to "end the fratricidal war".

In an address to soldiers and veterans of the Soviet Armed Forces, marking the 73rd founding anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy, the Russian parliament praised the servicemen, expressing certainty that they will continue to "defend the interests of our motherland".

In a follow-up to a debate on Russian President Boris Yeltsin's recent television interview, 114 Russian people's deputies, representing the "Russia" faction, issued a statement this morning, blaming the country's crisis on the Union leadership and President Mikhail Gorbachev's mistakes and inconsistent policy.

The deputies opposed Yeltsin's demand for Gorbachev's resignation.

As today's session was drawing to a close, 73 people's deputies from the Democratic Russian faction issued a statement in support of Yeltsin, "categorically rejecting the unworthy allegations in his address".

Silayev, Trade Union Chief Sign Agreement

LD2202202891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] In Moscow today Ivan Stepanovich Silayev, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Council of Ministers, and Klochkov, chairman of the Federation of Russian Independent Trade Unions, signed an agreement for 1991 between the government and the trade unions. This agreement will add to the social security of Russians during the transfer to a market economy.

Uncovered KGB Equipment Not For Eavesdropping

LD2502135191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1227 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 25 Feb (TASS)—The composition and technical specifications of the KGB apparatus and equipment at the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] House of Soviets show that it was intended for the protection of information in important rooms in this building and cannot be used for eavesdropping. That is the conclusion reached by an independent commission of experts. Appointments to the commission were agreed upon by the chairman of the Russian Federation's Council of Ministers and approved by the appropriate commission of deputies.

An official KGB statement published today recalls that on 6 February, bodyguards of the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet breached existing rules by breaking down the door to an office belonging to the KGB in the RSFSR House of Soviets. The office had been allocated to the KGB in 1981 when the building was handed over for use. Furthermore, the guards tried to convince people's deputies and journalists who were present that special equipment in this room was for eavesdropping.

The conclusion of the independent commission has been sent to Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, and to Ivan Silayev.

The KGB document stresses that the leadership of the RSFSR Council of Ministers had long known of the presence in this building of an office containing KGB aparatus and of its real purpose. Existing documents provide convincing evidence of this.

"Thus, statements on the discovery of KGB listening apparatus in the building of the Russian House of Soviets are clearly slanderous and provocative in nature," the KGB document points out.

Volgogrod Rally Appeals for Unity of USSR

LD2302233491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent Ye. Orlov, From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The recent events in Georgia, in South and North Ossetia, and indeed the whole of our troublesome life, confirm how important it is for us now to elaborate and to conclude as quickly as possible a new Union treaty and to gain calm in interethnic relations. This was one of the things said by participants in a large rally held in Volgograd today.

[Orlov] The organizers of the rally on the Volga embankment—it was held at the initiative of the Volgograd Lenin and Fatherland Society, the Council of Veterans of War and Labor, and Veterans of the Communist Party—gave it the name "For Civic Unity, Peace and Accord." That is what we do not have enough of today. And probably for that reason, unlike at previous rallies, the words down with were never heard.

The speakers tried to give well-argued foundations to their attitude toward the idea of a renewed union of sovereign republics, believing that without such a union, society will hardly manage to pull itself out of the profound economic crisis that has stricken the whole of our life.

They said that as a result of the division that has taken place, the established ties for reciprocal supplies of raw and other materials had collapsed; many large industrial enterprises in Volgograd and its oblast are on the verge of stopping work.

Those attending the rally adopted an appeal to all residents of Volgograd Oblast. At this tragic moment, the appeal says, we call on all of those who are not indifferent to the destiny of the fatherland to take an active part in the all-Union referendum on the future of the USSR, and to vote for preserving it as a union of sovereign, equal republics.

Yeltsin Meets Novgorod Dignitaries, Departs

LD2202220991 Moscow TASS in English 2128 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Troyanovskiy]

[Text] Novgorod February 22 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who is touring the republic, was welcomed in this old Russian city benevolently and with its traditional hospitality, although not all Novgorod residents approve of his political activities.

Tonight, before leaving for Moscow, Yeltsin had a meeting with deputies to the regional and city councils, representatives of labour collectives of the city and the region and of public organisations, with leaders of the local branches of the communist, social democratic and democratic parties. The meeting was held in the regional theatre seating 800 people.

Many of those who waited for Yeltsin at the entrance of the theatre carried man-made posters. Some of them expressed support for his political line, while others called into question his competence and the whole of his political activities.

For about two hours Yeltsin answered questions. He rejected a supposition that in his TV address he laid a claim for the national presidential post. He said: "Even if the president announced national presidential elections and suggested that I should be the alternative candidate, I would categorically refuse. The post with which I have been entrusted is high enough".

Yeltsin believes that his presence at the session of the Russian parliament during the discussion of a possible convocation of an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies would have been regarded as a "pressure exerted on the session". He said that he was ready to make a report at the congress. The republican parliament decided today to convene the extraordinary congress of deputies on March 28 and to hear Yeltsin's report at the congress.

Yeltsin said at the meeting with Novgorod residents that Novgorod should be given the status of russia's cultural centre. He believes that it is especially important now that Novgorod prepares to become a free enterprise zone.

Impact of Yeltsin RSFSR Presidency Pondered

PM2502145991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 22 Feb 91 p 1

[I. Sichka article: "February, 1991: Is Boris Wrong Again?"]

[Text] Yeltsin was certainly not the first to put forward the idea of Gorbachev's resignation. Not so long ago, Umalatova and Alksnis were also talking about a vote of no confidence in the USSR president. So the protest reaction to Yeltsin's speech on Central Television is prompted by deeper reasons than the real threat of the president's resignation. By his statement Yeltsin let it be understood that he is dissociating himself once and for all from Gorbachev's policy, he is abandoning the latter's system of coordinates, and any agreements between the two leaders in the near future are no longer possible. Besides which, it is plain that Yeltsin has embarked on a decisive stage of the struggle to institute the post of president of Russia, and his nomination for this job is in the pipeline.

It is clear that in the event of Yeltsin's election to the presidency of the republic by universal suffrage his position will be considerably strengthened. It is this "threat" that is very real. And the center will be forced to treat the position of the president of the largest republic, directly elected by the people to boot, far more seriously than it does at the moment.

There are two ways of preventing Yeltsin from being elected president of Russia: Either discredit the candidate himself or prevent the elections—and even better, prevent the institution of the post of president of Russia. It was precisely this matter that determined the direction of the debate at yesterday's session of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet.

The tone was set by the political statement read out by Supreme Soviet Deputy Chairman S. Goryacheva. Its authors did not hide the fact that their aim is to make Yeltsin resign from the post of Supreme Soviet chairman. It is for this reason that they are also insisting that an extraordinary congress be convened as a matter of urgency. They even name a date for this congress—not later than 4-5 March. Otherwise, as General Tarasov put it, "we will disrupt the spring sowing." The sowing, of course, is not really the problem at all. The reason for the rush, in my view, is something else—to forestall a republic referendum.

How might the situation develop in the Russian parliament? An extraordinary congress will undoubtedly take place, and it is the constitutional right of one-fifth of the deputy corps to convene it. The question of the date will probably be resolved in the near future. But the outcome of the congress is difficult to forecast, because those on the attacking side have just as much chance of losing their jobs. After all, two Supreme Soviet deputy chairmen, the two chairmen of the chambers, and two of their deputies have unequivocally stated that they can no longer work with Yeltsin. Right now it is fifty-fifty. If, however, the congress takes place after the republic referendum, then I would risk the speculation that Boris Nikolayevich himself might tender his resignation in order to concentrate entirely on the presidential election campaign.

As regards the possibility of disrupting the referendum—and attempts to do so are being made—this is unlikely. The "Democratic Russia" faction has at its disposal enough votes to insist both on a referendum and on its own wording of the question.

Over Half of Russians Want Gorbachev Resignation

LD2302135591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The All-Union Center for the Study of Public Opinion has held an express opinion poll in eleven towns of Russia. According to the data received, almost one quarter of those polled positively assess, to some degree or another, Mikhail Gorbachev's activity; in the post of USSR president: almost two thirds assess it to some degree or another negatively; the remainder find difficulty in giving a reply.

Over 55 percent of those polled positively assessed to one or another degree Boris Yeltsin's activity as chairman of Russia's Supreme Soviet; slightly over one quarter of those polled assessed the Russian leader's activity negatively, or rather negatively.

And one more reply to a question: What do you believe—would it be better or worse for the country if Gorbachev resigned from the post of USSR president? Over half of those polled replied that it would be better, or rather better. Fewer than 23 percent of those who took part in the poll replied that it would rather worse, or worse.

Yeltsin Drop, CPSU Rise in Poll Assessed

91UN0924A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 19 Feb 91 p 1

[Article by Aleksandr Krotkov: "Enough of Tripping People Up" subtitled "Two Sensations in the Political Popularity Ratings"]

[Text] It is sad to see in certain press organs the malicious delight that accompanies the commentary on the results of a telephone poll of Moscow citizens conducted in the middle of January by the sociological group of the subcommittee for studying public opinion of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet.

I recall that the main sensation was the sharp decline in the popularity rating of B. Yeltsin: from 49.7 percent in November to 17.4 percent in January. This "success" was literally greeted with jubilation by the opponents of the Russian chairman. Incidentally, the reaction of his followers was no better when they learned that M. Gorbachev had "lost somewhat less [than Yeltsin] but had not gained any more as a result."

Let me stipulate at the outset that one should look at both percentages with a certain amount of caution. Thus, for example, with respect to the USSR president, 34 percent of those questioned expressed a readiness to support him in the event of a referendum.

And instead of figuring out who is losing political weight more rapidly and who is losing it less rapidly, in my opinion, it would be better to think about why practically all the state figures have grown "gaunt"—those on the left and on the right and in the center.

The answer to this question would seem to be obvious: Under the conditions of the sharp decline of the standard of living, none of the powers that be can count on success. But is that all there is to it?

A second—to be sure, less advertised—sensation from the poll was the sharp growth of the popularity of the CPSU. While in August and November in alternative elections, 13 percent were prepared to support it, in January this figure was 26 percent. I think the curtain is raised over this phenomenon by other figures as well—concerning the unprecedented drop in the ratings of the former Democratic Platform in the CPSU (now the Republican Party): From November through January it dropped by a factor of 12 and since August it has dropped by a factor of 19—to one percent.

The majority of independent experts, when commenting on these figures, agree that the very idea of separation and confrontation, under whose banner the Democratic Platform operated, has turned out to be a fiasco. Each day there are more and more advocates of the idea of consolidation of the ranks (not only of the CPSU) as a guarantee of emerging from the crisis.

Indeed, it is impossible to move forward when the left foot wants to trip the right and vice versa. Unfortunately, it seems that some of those questioned associate the idea of democracy and glasnost with this kind of mutual tripping, and in January there were almost twice as many people were in favor of stopping it as there were in November (39 and 20 percent, respectively).

Therefore a long-term peace among all currently opposing political parties and groupings could mean a real chance of retaining democratic institutions in the country. Peace in the name of bringing the country out of the economic crisis.

I understand that this is almost unfeasible: Certain politicians have already shown themselves to be painfully unprofessional. But those who wish to remain politicians will have to take a step toward peace.

Telegrams to Legislature Support Yeltsin

LD2202123291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0500 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by Vera Shchelkunova from the Russian Supreme Soviet in Moscow on 21 February—recorded]

[Excerpt] I am conducting this reportage from the foyer next to the assembly hall of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. There are one, two, three, four stands here; all of them are stacked with telegrams. Such is the effect produced in the country by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's address on Central Television and by the political statement by Deputy Svetlana Petrovna Goryacheva demanding the convocation of an extraordinary congress and a political report by the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet. She believes that he has not justified the hopes placed in him during the elections.

These telegrams express supports for Yeltsin. The other telegrams, however, say that Yeltsin is profoundly wrong. Some people's deputies are standing here.

[Deputy Blokhin] Nine-tenths of the telegrams that have arrived express support for Boris Nikolayevich and one tenth condemn his address. I cannot understand why Boris Nikolayevich, as the leader of the Russian legislature, does not have the right to state his own view on this matter. I do not understand. He simply named...

[Shchelkunova, interrupting] Too harsh...

[Blokhin, interrupting] Possibly.

[Shchelkunova] For a politician.

[Blokhin] That's possible. That's possible. He could be accused of harshness, possibly of radicalism. That is possible. However, one thing he cannot be accused of is insincerity. Otherwise, should he, as was the custom for many years, in politics also, have said one thing and thought and, most important, done something else? Why is it that in domestic politics Mikhail Sergeyevich and the Union Government are unable to restructure themselves in the way they have restructured themselves in foreign policy? If they were more sincere and frank, Russia and the center would probably have found a common language long ago. [passage omitted]

Yeltsin on Scandal, Relations With Gorbachev

PM2202173991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by IZVESTIYA correspondent M. Ovcharov: "B. Yeltsin Answers Notes From the Hall"]

[Text] B. Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, has ended his two-day tour of Yaroslavl Oblast.

In Pereslavl-Zalesskiy he visited the "Niva" farm cooperative near the city, the "Slavich" Production Association, and two plants in Yaroslavl—the sewn goods and engine plants.

B. Yeltsin heard a great many bitter words and insults when talk turned not only to working conditions but also to poor housing, low wages, and, of course, food. There is, after all, absolutely nothing in the stores, and the chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet was able to see this for himself.

On Thursday evening B. Yeltsin met people's deputies of various levels from Yaroslavl Oblast, along with representatives of labor collectives, in a vast hall at the engine construction workers' center. After his speech he answered dozens of written questions.

[Question] Could you comment on the statement by the six that was read out at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet sitting?

[Yeltsin] No. I am still unable to comment.

[Question] When commenting on the case of the 140 billion rubles on television recently, you described this as chicanery on Kryuchkov's part, yet at the same time acknowledged you Filshin's guilt... Is it not better on your part to institute proceedings against the culprits than to hold a hazy position?

[Yeltsin] My stance is not hazy but quite clear. The deal did not take place. It was cut short. But it's a fact that Filshin is guilty here. He signed the first document—the government's guarantee and permission to conclude this transaction with a nonexistent firm. For that reason no one has relieved Filshin of the blame. He himself sensed this and handed in his resignation.

[Question] Don't you think that you should resign as well as the president in order to stabilize the situation in the country?

[Yeltsin] That's a possibility.

[Question] During the referendum will you vote in favor of preserving the Union or for Russia's secession from the Union?

[Yeltsin] Of course I am not in favor of Russia's seceding from the USSR. That is simply ridiculous and impossible.

[Question] How can one switch from a presidential form of rule to rule by a collegial organ—the Federation Council?

[Yeltsin] With the voluntary resignation of the president.

[Question] Are you prepared to put forward your candidacy for the post of head of state in a nationwide election?

[Yeltsin] I am not a contender for the post of USSR president. The post with which I have been entrusted today—that of leading Russia, Russia in such a state of hyper-neglect—is quite enough for me; I don't need anything else...

[Question] Is cooperation with M. Gorbachev possible now?

[Yeltsin] I will of course cooperate and conduct dialogue. As long as I do my job and he does his.

Controversy Over Yeltsin Interview Continues

Khasbulatov Defends Remarks

LD2402131391 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 0730 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Interview with RSFSR Vice President Ruslam Khasbulatov by Moscow correspondent Zoltan Tamasi; place and date not given—recorded, Khasbulatov speaks in Russian with superimposed Hungarian translation]

[Excerpts] [Tamasi] A few days ago several deputies of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation expressed their private views on the Central Television channel. [passage omitted] What is your private view on this?

[Khasbulatov] Look, on the one hand, Boris Yeltsin drew a very precise picture in the interview and gave a very correct assessment of the state of affairs in the Russian Federation. On the other hand he proposed the resignation of Gorbachev, which he had the right to do as a Soviet people's deputy or in his capacity as president of the Russian Federation Council. I called attention in the legislature to the fact that Yeltsin, who did not speak on behalf of the legislature, has the right to hold such an opinion.

By the way, let me add that what he said was not completely groundless. However, I do not consider the reaction as of equal value. The USSR Supreme Soviet condemned Yeltsin hastily and immediately and even accused him of anti-constitutionalism. Regarding the statement of the six members of our Presidency, I cannot call this either correct or moral. I can only understand Lisakov, because he already expounded these views at the Congreass of People's Deputies, whereas the others, even in front of me, said nothing about the fact that they have been observing with such anxiety the activity of Boris Yeltsin for quite some time. It would be peculiar for me to work with them in the future—after all they include two of Yeltsin's deputies—but I will try. In addition, they also stated untruths; that Yeltsin is seeking confrontation and that he is urging the creation of an independant Russian army.

In all certainty, important party interests played a part, and those who signed had been worked on at an appropriate level. I am sorry that it happened the way it did.

[Tamasi] Regarding party influence, this could be observed in the demand that the Congress of the People's Deputies should be convened on 4 March, that is, even before the referendum.

[Khasbulatov] Of course, the affair is clear. I think that a kind of parliamentary conspiracy was at issue; it failed because, fortunately, the people in the Supreme Soviet are able people and voted in the end for the 28 March date, which is acceptable. By that time it is hoped that it will be possible to prepare properly, because there is no point in holding a congress for the sake of holding a congress. The intention could be seen; the party theoreticians—who are not the brightest of minds—decided that they should try to convene a congress as soon as possible, to work on the deputies and to overthrow Yeltsin.

Sverdlovsk Officials Divided

LD2202224191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1921 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Nadezhda Potapov]

[Text] Sverdlovsk, 22 Feb (TASS)—City authorities of Sverdlovsk in the Urals where Boris Yeltsin, the leader of the Russian legislature, was born and where he began his career, and the oblast CPSU organization which at some point he was the leader of, gave different assessments of his television speech broadcast last Monday when he demanded the USSR president's resignation.

Yuriy Samorin, chairman of the Sverdlovsk City Soviet, reported on local television today that "approximately 200,000 Sverdlovsk inhabitants back up assessments and conclusions" given by the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet in his television interview.

The leader of this large industrial city in the Urals said that headquarters have been set up here to accept applications, telegrams, and letters in support of the head of the Russian legislature as well as critical remarks and constructive proposals. According to the mayor, Boris Yeltsin has "given a clear and rigid assessment of the political situation in the country."

But in the statement made by participants in the Sverdlovsk Oblast Party Committee, Boris Yeltsin's speech was characterized as "aggravating the situation which is on its own explosive," as "an undisguised attempt to remove the leadership of the country from power.". Nevertheless, the Sverdlovsk communists declared that many actions of the president and the leadership of the USSR are "indecisive and late" and that "shortcomings are evident" in their policies.

Commentary Criticizes Remarks

LD2302111291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 2000 22 Feb 91

[(Mikhail Gustov) commentary]

[Text] Yuriy Prokofyev, first secretary of the CPSU Moscow town Committee, gave an interview today on the Good Evening, Moscow program. Touching upon the televised speech by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, he expressed the opinion that under present circumstances Yeltsin had no right to make such a statement, and said afterwards that the Russian leader's popularity rating has sharply dropped among communists, one would have thought, since the public opinion poll which we mentioned earlier shows a step in another direction. Our commentator (Mikhail Gustov) writes the following:

In this regard Yuriy Prokofyev acknowledged the fact that he had talked twice on the phone to Gorbachev during the work of the plenum, but on other issues, as he wisely phrased it. The following approach of the chief communist of Moscow is worth noting. He said that Yeltsin is persecuted by no other than his own legislature. It seems that the Moscow plenum just mildly reprimanded Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin when it assessed his actions as criminal, writes (Mikhail Gustov). Yuriy Prokofyev considers himself an optimist, and condescendingly agreed that one has a right to voice his point of view, as our commentator understood—anyone but Yeltsin.

Yuriy Prokofyev will lead communists tomorrow to the meeting devoted to Soviet Army and Navy Day. It seems that anticipating this day and bearing in mind what kind of audience he will have to face, he paid a rare compliment to armed forces, calling the Army simply the core of the state, no less, no more. Yes, a new core was wedged into the state, (Mikhail Gustov) continues, the state which has already turned into a pin cushion. First the party and then the father of peoples, followed by fathers of a smaller scale. Now a new [word indistinct] has appeared, made of alloyed steel—the Army. I do not remember whether Louis XIV or Louis XV said: I am the state. Here the state is anything else on earth but the people, concludes our commentator.

Moscow CPSU Gorkom 19 Feb Plenum Reported

PM2202161591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "To Preserve the Renewed Union"]

[Text] The public crisis in the country has reached a dangerous point, beyond which destructive social upheavals are possible. Aware of the significance of the referendum for the destinies of the USSR peoples, the CPSU's Moscow City organization cannot fail to participate in this important act, the preparations for which must be at the center of political work by the capital's party organization. This was emphasized 19 February at a combined plenum of the city party committee and the Moscow City CPSU organization's Control Commission.

The plenum participants advocated that communists develop extensive organizational and explanatory work among all social groups, including at places of residence, in support of the referendum and in order to shape public opinion in favor of preserving the USSR.

The plenum also discussed the city party organization's budget for 1991. A resolution was adopted in connection with the Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee's decision to transfer some of the premises of the V.I. Lenin Central Museum to the USSR Union of Lessees and Employers. Communists expressed their attitude to the events in South Ossetia and to the reform of price formation. The plenum urged Moscow's communists and all its working people and residents to participate in the 23 February rally in Manezhnaya Square in support of the Armed Forces and for the preservation of the USSR.

The plenum came out in support of the efforts by M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and president of the USSR, aimed at stabilizing the situation in the country.

Leningrad Referendum on City, Oblast Outlined

LD2302230191 Leningrad Maritime Press Service in Russian 1400 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The necessary number of signatures of deputies of the city soviet has been gathered in the Leningrad Soviet to conduct a regionl referendum on the question of the constitutional status of Leningrad and the Leningrad region within the Russian Federation.

The aims of the referendum, whose originator was the working group of the Leningrad Soviet on constitutional proposals, consists of:

1. Confirming Leningrad's adherence to the principles of the sovereignty, unity, and federal structure of Russia;

2. Establishing by means of direct balloting by the population the future status of Leningrad and the region in connection with the incipient reform of the federative organization of Russia and the preparation of its new constitution. In addition, it is also intended, through the referendum, to resolve the matter of the establishment of the post of head of executive authority in Leningrad, elected by the population.

According to the draft, it is intended to put forward three options to resolve the matter of the Russian status of Leningrad and the Leningrad region for the decision of the people on 17 March.

Option 1: "A city with oblast rights"—the maintenance of the existing constitutional status of Leningrad as a city of republican subordination with the rights of an oblast (kray) of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

Option 2: "A city with the rights of a republic"—granting Leningrad the rights of a republic within the Russian Federation, including the right to adopt its own constitution and legislation.

Option 3: "A city and oblast as a republic"—the constitutional reunification of Leningrad and Leningrad Oblast with the acquisition by the region of the status of a full republic within the Russian Federation.

The first option simply records the existing, lamentably familiar, status of "a great city with the fate of an oblast" and really does not include constitutional reform in the straightforward sense of this concept.

The second and third options of constitutional reform in the Leningrad region are of a fundamentally new content and are concerned with the acquisition of republican status within the Russian Federation, either by Leningrad (Option 2), or by the Leningrad region—by Leningrad and Leningrad Oblast—united on a constitutional basis (Option 3). It goes without saying that the third option should be based on the positive decision not only of the city, but also of analoguous oblast referendum.

Such a cardinal turning in the fate of the Leningrad region as the acquisition of republican status will demand considerable political boldness and maneuvrability from both our soviets—the Leningrad Soviet and the Leningrad Oblast soviet. In the final analysis, they and they alone have a right to take a step in this direction—to appoint the holding of a referendum.

Leningrad Obkom Warns USSR 'in Danger'

PM1902161791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[Correspondent V. Gerasimov report: "Plenum Held"]

[Text] Leningrad, 17 Feb—"The fatherland is in danger!"—these words were uttered at the Leningrad CPSU Obkom [Oblast Committee] plenum after discussion of the party organization's tasks in regard to the all-Union referendum in March. The main speaker, B.V. Gidaspov, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and first secretary of the party obkom, and other Communists spoke with alarm for the country's future about the mounting sociopolitical tension in the region and the deteriorating economic position. Attempts to check the negative processes have not been successful.

Local management organs have been unable to influence the state of affairs—strikes, unplanned stoppages of enterprises, and confrontation between organs of power at different levels have had a destabilizing influence on all sectors. Today dozens of plants and factories are on the point of cutting back production. They do not even have contracts for the supply of raw materials and semimanufactures. Purchases of agricultural output have decreased and livestock numbers have declined.

In an atmosphere of feverish attacks upon the Soviet state and the CPSU certain groups of feckless politicians who have fought their way to power continue to sow discord, oppose the signing of a new Union treaty, and call for a boycott of the referendum, although the results of sociological research show that a clear majority of the population favors preserving the USSR.

The party organization cannot shirk taking part in this most important political act, the plenum participants noted. On the basis of the existing USSR legislation and constitution communists must explain to people that the preservation of the USSR is in their vital interests and that each citizen must make his choice with a sense of personal responsibility for the homeland's future.

We need competent state power free from bureaucracy, the appeal to Leningraders adopted by the plenum says, power with clear moral guidelines and values capable of ending the chaos and anarchy and defending working people regardless of their nationality. Our fatherland is in danger today. Only by preserving the state in the voluntary association of the USSR will we be able to overcome our common difficulties and find the strength to extricate ourselves from the crisis. By voting for the preservation of the Soviet Union 17 March we will determine the future of our children and grandchildren.

Party Officials Discuss Upcoming Referendum

PM2402141191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "They Compared Guidelines"]

[Text] Leningrad, 19 Feb—Preparation for the 17 March all-Union referendum, questions of the activation of communist deputies in the work of soviets, and party committees' activities in present conditions were the main topics at a conference of first secretaries of city and rayon party committees in the northwest of the country. Representatives of nine oblasts and autonomous republics in the region participated in the meeting, which completed its work in Leningrad today.

There was also a discussion about accelerating the elaboration of a new party program and developing extensive agitation in society for the preservation of the Soviet Union as a unified multinational state.

Reports were delivered by B.V. Gidaspov, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and first secretary of Leningrad Oblast Party Committee, and by I.I. Antonovich and A.N. Ilin, members of the Politburo and secretaries of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee.

Polozkov Receives Japanese Envoy

LD2002231691 Moscow TASS in English 1719 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 20 TASS—Ivan Polozkov, member of the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and first secretary of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee, today received the Japanese Ambassador to the USSR, Sumio Edamura.

During the conversation, marked by good will and friendliness, the sides discussed Soviet-Japanese relations and Mikhail Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Japan.

Replying to the ambassador's questions, Polozkov described in detail the Russian Communist Party's stance on key issues of social development.

He stressed that, proceeding from the interests of the peoples in the two countries, the Russian Communist Party will promote Soviet-Japanese inter-state relations, including relations between the Russian Federation and Japan.

Communist Party Defends Lenin Museum

PM2202145791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 20 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[Statement by the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo under the general heading: "In Defense of the V.I. Lenin Museum"; first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] The RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party Central Committee Politburo has adopted a statement in connection with working people's statements in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in defense of the V.I. Lenin Central Museum.

The RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo deems it necessary to voice its opinion on a question perturbing Soviet people.

Let us face the truth: Forces whose aim is to discredit the name of Lenin are persistently showing themselves in our society. They are endeavoring to demoralize the people, pushing them toward the abyss of unconsciousness and trying to distort in the public's mind the image of a man who has gone down in the history of civilization and progressive revolutionary thought forever.

In the context of the anti-Lenin campaign that has been unleashed, entrepreneurs' so-called "sit-in" at the V.I. Lenin Central Museum with the blessing of the Moscow City Soviet Ispolkom [executive committee] is not an ordinary incident in today's political life. This once again eloquently illustrates the desire of certain force to transform the renewal of socialism into an anti-people pseudoperestroyka, to subordinate cultural life to the laws of commerce, and to freeze the process of society's spiritual renewal.

The desecration of holy places is a well-tried and reliable means of turning the people into a controlled mob, making it possible to effect a counterrevolutionary coup first in people's minds and then in their entire lives. We see that work in this direction is being carried out in a consistent, deliberate, and extremely inventive manner. The political significance of the public protest in connection with the encroachment on the V.I. Lenin Central Museum is all the greater. The SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA articles provoked a broad response by many labor collectives, in the Army and Navy, among veterans and young people. They have been discussed at open meetings of communists. Soviet people's unanimous desire to defend the name of V.I. Lenin and to deal antisocialist forces a resolute rebuff is clearly manifest in the broad range of sentiments, statements, and proposals.

We call upon Russia's communists and all honest citizens to support this noble impulse, born in the very heart of the people, and to participate as much as they can in implementing the specific actions that many collectives are proposing these days, namely:

—to hold an All-Union Lenin Subbotnik 20 April 1991, some of the funds from which could be channeled into restoring and developing Lenin museums and memorials;

—to set up a peoples' fund of voluntary donations "In Defense of the V.I. Lenin Museum," which would constitute a nationwide All-Union V.I. Lenin Fund, a center for the study, creative use, propaganda, and development of Leninism;

—to channel part of the party dues left at the disposal of primary organizations into the reconstruction of the V.I. Lenin Central Museum and material support for its subsidiaries and memorials.

We call on union republic communist party central committees to pool their efforts and to consistently uphold the purity of the Leninist banner and the socialist path of our fatherland's development.

In defending the memory of Lenin and Leninism, we are defending the power of the people, the integrity of the country, and a social system oriented toward social justice.

[Signed] RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo.

Merging Tatar Party, Soviet Posts Banned

PM2002120191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Feb 91 Union Edition p 3

[From IZVESTIYA, TASS, and INTERFAX roundup: "Let's Combine Posts!"]

[Text] The Tatarstan CPSU Republic Committee has come out against separating party and soviet posts.

"I ask secretaries who continue to combine two posts," R. Idiatullin, first secretary of the Republic Committee, stated, "to be in no hurry to give one of them up."

Yet the local legislature has issued a specific resolution banning such job combinations. In most cities and rayons the party-soviet monolith has been split up and former apparatus leaders have switched to being soviet chairmen, IZVESTIYA correspondent A. Sabirov reports.

Tatar SSR Mission Opens in Moscow

91UN0924B Moscow TRUD in Russian 20 Feb 91 p 1

[Article by Ye. Grigoryev: "The 'Hand of Kazan' in the Capital"]

[Text] **A permanent mission of the Tatar SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Council of Ministers has been opened up in Moscow.**

The 34-year-old Shavkat Arslanov, the youngest of the people representing other republics in Moscow, was appointed the permanent representative. He worked previously as a senior scientific associate of the department of administration of Moscow State University. The "Hand of Kazan" will interact closely with the central governmental and economic organs, participate in the development of draft decrees of the Union Government pertaining to the interests of the sovereign republic, and maintain contacts with the public cultural center in Moscow.

Proceeds From Gold Sales Explained

LD2002170691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] In his interview on Central Television yesterday, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin said that he has information that 200 tonnes of gold have been sold by the Union Government, but he did not say what the money was used for. So quite an ambiguous situation has arisen. Here is an interview with Konstantin Fedorovich Katushev, chairman of the state committee for foreign economic links.

[Begin recording] [Katushev] The Union Government sold 200 tonnes of gold. This is the latest (?deal). You are asking a question that sounds criminal. Yes, the Soviet Government did authorize the sale of 234 tonnes of that gold on the markets last year. Something over R1.6 billion will be obtained for it, or more accurately 1.638 billion foreign currency rubles. This money went ot buy the food which we bought for cash last year because of a lack of other sources of finance.

For example, we bought more than 942,000 tonnes of meat and meat products, which were about R866 million; we bought 95,000 tonnes of dried milk, which were R119 million; we bought nearly 267,000 tonnes of animal fats, which were R325 million; and we bought 880,000 tonnes of vegetable fats, which were R320 million. I will not mention the purchases of other food goods, also for cash, on which the freely convertible currency which we got from selling the gold was also spent.

[Correspondent] Boris Nikolayevich was thinking of the fact that gold which is mined in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] is being sold, bearing in mind the sovereignty of the RSFSR. The interests of the RSFSR are not being taken into account.

[Katushev] Well I cannot agree with that, if Comrade Yeltsin put his question like that because...

[Correspondent] That's what I suppose. This is my interpretation.

[Katushev] Or you suppose it. Because the goods, including the ones I mentioned, go to the large industrial centres of Russia.

[Correspondent] Do you consider it essential for the union government to consult with the RSFSR Government when these kinds of sales are made?

[Katushev] According to the system now in force, such consultations are not obligatory because the government is responsible, it has the task of determining day-to-day functions and carrying them out, and it is responsible for them. And our government is ready to account for what was done in 1990.

Now there is a body, the Union—Republican Hard Currency Committee, which will examine such questions and such sales. [end recording]

TV Correspondent 'Beat Up' by Leningrad Militia

LD2402140591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The SEVERO-ZAPAD Agency reports that on 22 February staff members of Militia Station No. 71 in Leningrad, without any explanation, arrested and beat up Vladimir Fonarev, a television correspondent on the "Monitor" program. Doctors at the No. 1 Medical Institute, where Fonarev went for treatment, said that this is not the first instance of casualties appearing from Militia Station No. 71 in Leningrad.

Additional Radio Frequencies Allotted to Leningrad

LD2302234691 Leningrad Domestic Service in Russian 1500 GMT 13 Feb 91

[Summary] In January the Ministry of Communications allotted three additional wavelengths on the medium wave for the organization of radio broadcasting companies, namely the Soviet-U.S. Inkom joint venture, the "Stasa Namina" cultural center, and the Open City radio studio.

"As you know, Kravchenko, chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, has not agreed to farm out the Leningrad television and radio committee to Leningraders. Therefore, it is possible that soon the number of Leningrad news and purely Leningrad news and purely Leningrad commentaries on them will only be heard thanks to these three radio stations."

Western Republics

Moldovan Deputies Reject USSR Referendum Law

PM2502093191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Referendum Rejected"]

[Text] Kishinev, 19 Feb—The Moldovan legislature today rejected the USSR Law "On the Nationwide Vote (USSR Referendum)." Last Friday, after a several-hour debate, the majority of deputies' clubs had arrived at a compromise decision on the need to hold the referendum with the inclusion of another question of a republican nature in addition to the question contained in the Law on the Referendum.

But deputies have been worked on during the last few days. This morning's session was addressed by the republic's leaders—M. Snegur, A. Moshanu, and M. Druk. Their speeches were rather like an ultimatum, leaving no choice other than to vote against the referendum. In violation of the temporary standing orders governing the Supreme Soviet's work, its leaders placed deputies in a humiliating position. Every deputy had to stand up and declare: "yes" or "no."

Rukh Activists Occupy Lvov Building for 3d Day

LD2402232391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2111 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Report by V. Lyashko from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] For the third day, activists of Rukh [Ukraine People's Movement for Perestroyka] and the Union of Independent Ukrainian Youth continue to occupy the premises of the former House of Political Education, now the Sociopolitical Center of the Lvov Oblast Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. The newspaper VILNA UKRAINA today called the seizure of the building an act of lawlessness. Representatives of Rukh, who have organized an around-the-clock guard here have their own point of view.

[Sukhetskiy, deputy chairman of the Rukh Kray Rada] We are lessees of these premises since we concluded a contract with the oblast soviet and the decision of the Lvov arbiter was in our favor. A month has already passed since we concluded the contract. The oblast committee was warned but it does not want, so to speak, to vacate these premises. We are not at odds with them, but we are quietly occupying these premises as they are ours.

Gold Prospecting Reported in Ukraine

LD2402204791

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian at 1530 GMT on 24 February carries a 2.5 minute report by correspondent Klimov on the Ukrainian Klondike, as it is called, the area of the (Sura River) near Dnepropetrovsk where gold has been discovered. Klimov notes that the gold is 40-100 meters underground and recovering it will be very difficult. The video shows a snowy landscape and men examining rock samples as Klimov points out that the current media hype is out of date, since gold was found here 20 years ago. Now, the South Ukraine Geology Production Association has received 1 million rubles for prospecting work in the region. Looking at samples containing approximately 100 grams of gold per tonne, Z.P. Malyarov, head of the production association, says the survey will reveal whether there are real deposits: "I would say that on the whole, the country does not need Ukrainian gold as such. The country has sufficient gold reserves and has developed gold-extracting industry in the east of the country. But for the people of the Ukraine, for the republic as a whole under conditions of sovereignty, under conditions coming into force under the law on economic independence, it has a certain significance. When the Ukrainian Government turned to the Main Geological Administration, the latter was already able to propose surveyed deposits in the western oblasts of the Ukraine, which can take the industry, in Transcarpathia [as heard], and now there are our interesting finds in the southern Ukraine and in the north, in Zhitomir Oblast." Drilling installations will arrive in the next few weeks.

Caucasus

Armenian Supreme Soviet Makes Appointments

NC2002153991 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 1730 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Before discussing the items on the agenda of the morning session of the republic's Supreme Soviet, the appeals of two people's deputies were announced. People's Deputy Lyudvig Khachatryan stated that since he has been appointed chairman of the Armenian Church Affairs Council attached to the Council of Ministers, he should be relieved from membership of the Supreme Soviet's Standing Commission for the Establishment of Independent Statehood and National Policy Affairs.

The people's deputy Valeriy Abramyan stated that he has been appointed deputy minister of agriculture and asked to be relieved of his responsibilities as a People's Deputy, and from membership in the Supreme Soviet's Standing Commission for Agricultural and Village Developments.

The session acceded to their request.

The deputies then continued to debate the bill on public and political organizations. [passage omitted]

Armenian Diaspora Committee Elects New Chairman

NC2302231391 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Yerevan, 22 Feb (ARMENPRES)—The administrative section of the Committee for Cultural Ties With Diaspora Armenians met in Yerevan on 21 February and relieved Karlen Dallakyan from his post as chairman of the committee, acceding to his request and "unanimously" elected Professor Khrachik Simonyan, a corresponding member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences and and doctor of historical sciences, the new chairman of the committee.

In giving thanks for the trust shown in him, Simonyan said that henceforth, the Committee for Cultural Ties With Diaspora Armenians will be guided by the declaration on independence adopted by the Armenian legislature. The declaration will form the basis for the daily activities of the committee. [passage omitted]

Simonyan added: We will regard the diaspora as an inalienable part of our entity. This requires that the committee renounce political discrimination and abandon the harmful practice of discrimination pursued for decades. Armenia is the fatherland of all our exiled compatriots in the diaspora, and therefore the committee will give equal treatment to all the political parties and hold in equal regard all public organizations. I think that the diaspora could play a major role in the effort to revive our fatherland. [passage omitted] More than two and one-half million Armenians live in the diaspora, and there is as much in the internal diaspora [the Soviet Union outside of Armenia]. It will also be the duty of our committee to set up a subcommittee responsible for the affairs of the Armenians of internal diaspora. [passage omitted]

Armenia Denies Report on Nakhichevan Shooting

LD2302055991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The report carried on the Central TV program "120 Minutes Plus 30," that the village of Sadarak in the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic had been fired on from Armenia, has been denied by the press center of the Armenian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Military guard posts along the border between Armenia and the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic have not recorded a single case of shooting during the last two months. Furthermore, the village of Sadarak is almost two kilometers away from the frontier zone, and it is virtually impossible to direct automatic weapons fire against it from Armenian territory, the press center says.

Armenian Supreme Soviet Adopts Appeal to NKAO

NC2302181291 Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The Armenian Supreme Soviet adopted an appeal yesterday addressed to the Armenians of Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, NKAO]. The appeal says:

Compatriots, the legal decision on the reunification of Artsakh with the motherland expressed by your unanimous will three years ago in February of 1988 initiated the renaissance of all the Armenian people. To your struggle, which emanated from international law and specifically from the peoples' right to self-determination and in which the whole Armenian people participated, the Soviet and Azerbaijani authorities responded with political, military, economic and psychological pressures, and with the disorientation of public opinion and with massacres and deportations of the Armenian population in Azerbaijan. Even now the aim of the despotism is to uproot the people of Artsakh from their historical motherland.

Despite the unending trials and privations, the will of the Armenian people, your heroic will, remains unbroken. The just struggle is continuing.

Under the present conditions, the Republic of Armenia aspires for a political solution to the Artsakh problem, the real path to which lies in the repudiation of brute force and the realization of the free self-determination for the people of Artsakh. At the same time, the Armenian Republic declares with all the responsibility it entails, its abiding resolve to stand up for Artsakh and to defend with all the means available your lives and vital interests. It will do everything to bring the process of reunification of Artsakh with the motherland to its conclusion.

Armenian Legislature Okays Privatization Bases

LD2202164291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Armenia's Supreme Soviet has approved the bases for privatization in the republic submitted by the Council of Ministers. It is expected that enterprises in the manufacturing and services sectors will become the objects of privatization.

The deputies gave instructions that the draft law on privatization should be drawn up within a month.

Azerbaijan Legislature Ends First Work Week

91US0309A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 20 Feb 91 p 2

[Report by RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA correspondent Ali Naivov: "Accord Is Not Coming Easily"]

[Text] Baku—**A working week of the new Azerbaijani legislature, which had assembled for its first session, has been completed.**

The five days of the session by no means shattered the fragile peace in the republic, which has seen just about everything in recent years. But they will undoubtedly leave a pronounced mark on the history of the nation, which has, incidentally, long-standing traditions of parliamentarianism. After all, back in 1920 the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was the first state of the Muslim East to have parted with authoritarianism, alas, not for long. It was not fortuitous that even the outward attributes of the present session stressed the continuity of the ongoing changes with the historical forefather of the reviving national democracy. The meeting hall of the Supreme Soviet was adorned with the blue, red, and green flag with the crescent and eight-pointed star—the flag of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, which will hence forth be the national flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as it is now called. Supreme Soviet decrees on the national coat of arms, the wording of the anthem and decorations were adopted, and a new date—Azerbaijan Statehood Revival Day—appeared on the calendar.

But at the center of the attention of the corps of deputies, of course, were not the heraldic makeup, but far more complex problems born of the collisions of our contradictory restructuring reality.

The session began nervously. A group of deputies who are members of the "Democratic Bloc," in disagreement with a number of procedural matters, staged a walkout on the first day. People gathering for a mass meeting soon appeared near the Supreme Soviet building. Strike calls were heard at plants in some places. They met with no serious support, it is true. I specially visited some of the most important Baku enterprises—the Promstroymekhanizatsiya Trust and the computer plant—and the people were working there as always.

But the nervousness caused by the opposition demarche was also echoed in subsequent days of the session—even when the "Dembloc" people returned to the meeting hall to continue legislative business. The deputies crowded the microphones and the rostrum, particularly during discussion of such an acute issue as the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast. Specifically, a sharp rebuke from the members of the legislature was elicited by the speech of Deputy Geydar Aliyev. Fuel was also added to the fire by Central Television, which showed on the Television News Service program a closeup of armored personnel carriers, which lent a "militarist," nerve-tingling cover to the proceedings.

On day three the political and factional balance at the session was, not without difficulty, restored. The deputies adopted by majority a decree on the appointment of Gasan Gasanov as prime minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Elmira Kafarova was elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet.

The session recessed until 5 March. The deputies sent a number of bills back to committee for completion: a solid amount of work remains to be done on them. The first round of the legislative debate showed how difficult accord is proving.

Commission Discusses Azeri Refugee Affairs

NC2202031291 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] The permanent commission on refugee affairs and relations with Azerbaijanis living in the other Union republics, which is affiliated with the Republic of Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet, has met under S. Rustamkhanli. According to official information, nearly 240,000 refugees are living in our republic. A number of organizations are currently working to resettle the refugees and provide them with jobs.

Houses are being constructed for the refugee families in many cities and rayons. Meanwhile, an effort is being made to resolve the question of finding jobs for the refugees.

Nevertheless, the meeting noted with uneasiness that the situation is not the same everywhere. The speakers said that ascertaining the situation in all places, examining the work carried out by the organizations concerned with the problems of the refugees, and holding regional meetings for consultations with the leading officials of the said organizations is essential for coordinating the effort of all parties concerned and drawing up comprehensive work plans.

It is planned to hold the first of these meetings in the [name indistinct] region in the republic.

The meeting discussed broadening relations with the Azerbaijanis who live in the other parts of the Soviet Union. The need to establish an Azerbaijani cultural center for that purpose was stressed.

The meeting also approved the commission's work plan and debated a number of organizational matters.

Missile Strikes Military Unit in Stepanakert

LD2302044991 Moscow TASS in English 1948 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert February 22 TASS—A rocket missile exploded today on the territory of a military unit in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh.

The missile flew over the military commandant's office, the Interior Ministry department and the KGB department buildings and residential houses to explode in the military unit. No casualties have been reported.

Police Lieutenant-Colonel Leonid Troshin, heading a Soviet Interior Ministry investigation group, told TASS that the missile was launched from a site near the city stadium. An investigation has begun.

No Injuries Reported in Attempt on Bus in NKAO

LD2402124891 Moscow TASS in English 1235 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Valery Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert February 24 TASS—A powerful explosion thundered in the regional centre of Nagorno-Karabakh today. An attempt to blow up a bus running between Shusha and Agdam was made at 9:15. A large crater and a twisted bus were left on the site of the explosion.

Soviet Interior Ministry spokesman said the explosive device was planted under the roadbed and a wire was stretching from it in the direction of the city. Happily, the blast occurred before the bus hit the device and did not injure any of the passengers. Some people were hurt by glass splinters and were deafened by the explosion.

According to tentative information, the bus carrying Azerbaijanians was also fired at. Several people were detained on suspicion of involvement in the act of terrorism near the site of the incident. The investigating and operations group of the Soviet Interior Ministry, state security and local law enforcement agencies' staff are conducting an investigation.

NKAO Deputy Balayan Sends Letter to Yeltsin

NC1802190091 Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 17 Feb 91

[From the republican press review]

[Text] The press has published a letter from [USSR People's Deputy from Nagorno-Karabakh and writer] Zori Balayan to Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet.

In his lengthy letter entitled "The Strategy for Existence," Balayan writes: At this very moment when Russia has embarked on the path to genuine liberation, the Christian Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO], true to the principles and commandments of our ancestors, showing the patience characteristic of the Armenian people, and fearing a political [word indistinct] calamity which may reduce the entire country to ruins, will continue the struggle for the viability of that part of historic Armenia which has entered the Russian structure and which is regarded as a reliable vanguard.

No Russian soldier has ever been killed by Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. Yet, because of the intentional misinformation campaign, many members of the public are wittingly or unwittingly equating the criminal and the victim. Public opinion may be unaware that Geydar Aliyev loudly proclaimed from the podium of the recent session of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet that the number of Armenians had been sharply reduced during his term of office and that he had done everything possible to detach the Armenian autonomous oblast from the Armenian Republic. For his part, Polyanichko, second secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee, declared that he was able to increase the number of the armed bandits in a year which has helped alter the demographic situation in favor of the Azerbaijanis. This Russian man demanded a further increase in the number of these bandits in the oblast so that the Armenians could be eliminated once and for all. Interior Minister Asadov has made no secret of the fact that the autonomous oblast is surrounded by 10,000 members of a special purpose militia who are armed to the teeth. He has added that the extermination of the Armenians is a technical matter.

All this does not of course stand in the way of greeting the signing of a treaty with Russia, under whose structure Nagorno-Karabakh had been until the name Azerbaijan appeared on the map.

I send this letter in the hope that you will understand the importance of this problem which requires an urgent solution, writes Zori Balayan.

Measures To 'Normalize' Life in NKAO Detailed

NC2202192791 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Text] It has now been nearly two weeks since the Republic of Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet held its first session, which also debated the measures related to the effort made to normalize the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh [NKAO]. What are the measures that have been put into effect by the republic's NKAO Organization Committee during this period of time? What has been achieved in the direction of maintaining security and the rule of law in the NKAO? Our correspondent has asked Muradov, member of the NKAO Organization Committee and party secretary of the experimental electrical starters factory in Baku, to reply to these questions. Muradov said the following:

The NKAO Organization Committee maintained its multisided and practical work, including the effort it makes to maintain jurisprudence and the rule of law, even when the meeting of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet was in session. Eight armed men were arrested and two automatic weapons, 500 rounds of ammunition, and a number of explosives were seized in the [name indistinct] and Neftkaladeresi towns during the operations carried out during the past few days. Radayev, deputy chairman of the Azerbaijan Council of Ministers, participated in the meeting that was held at the NKAO military commandant's headquarters on matters related to the question of security on the roads and in the republic in general.

Regardless of the problems that are being encountered, every necessary measure is being put into effect to normalize the situation in the NKAO. For example, the construction of a railway freight unloading center in Khodzhaly has been completed. Henceforth, the freight to be sent to the Azerbaijani towns in the NKAO will be dispatched directly to the railway freight unloading center. Meanwhile, the second stage of the tailoring factory branch and a water supply network will be commissioned in Kirkidzhan in the near future.

As in the past, the committee continues to control the work carried out at the local airport. The strengthening of control on the transportation of passengers and freight and on the sale of flight tickets has significantly increased interest in the organization of flights from Armenia to Stepanakert. Naturally, this has resulted in a significant reduction in rates. It is common knowledge that according to the information provided by many individuals and pertinent organizations, the employees of the airport earned a daily [word indistinct] rubles until recently.

Meanwhile, the establishment of small offices in the form of central departments in the Azerbaijani towns in the NKAO is continuing. These departments are being established at local [word indistinct] level. Polyanichko, second secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee; Avdunov, first secretary of Gyandzha City Party Committee; Kachkinov, first secretary of the Baku City Narimanov District Party Committee; and Sharipov, first secretary of the Baku City Khatayi District Party Committee, visited a number of towns in the NKAO. They discussed matters related to the social and economic development of the towns and the strengthening of the work collectives.

The cautious and consistent work carried out by the NKAO Organization Committee to restore normal life in the NKAO has weakened the influence of the leaders of the NKAO movement. Another 26 Armenians signed the appeal made by the NKAO Armenians to the people of Azerbaijan, an appeal which is common knowledge, during the past few days.

On the other hand, the article that has been published in [word indistinct] SOYUZ under the title "The NKAO Crisis" has aroused interest.

We have a lot of work to carry out in the future. We greatly need the help of all the republic's work collectives and citizens. Everyone must regard himself as a fully authorized member of the NKAO Organization Committee. As such, the work that will be carried out will be more productive.

Georgian Statement on Shavnabada 'Provocation'

AU2202180091 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1445 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Statement issued by the Press Center of the Georgian Supreme Soviet; date not given]

[Text] The republican Interior Ministry organs have arrested Mkhedrioni [paramilitary group] commander

Mr. Dzhaba Ioseliani and other leaders of this organization. It is common knowledge that, in spite of repeated warnings on the part of the authorities, the Mkhedrioni has become one of the major factors of destabilization of the political situation, and the bandit attacks carried out by its members, first in the Kakhetia region and then in Samtredia acquired an increasingly unruly and dangerous character.

The Shavnabada events could also be considered only in this light, however, a detailed analysis of that incident evokes totally different suspicions. The point is that the operation to neutralize the numerous and well-armed organization would not have been possible without long and well-organized preparations, without taking into account the possible variants, or without proper disposition of forces. We believe that the day for the beginning of the operation had been chosen in advance; and it is surprising that the incident in Shavnabada took place precisely on the eve of the operation. Such an unusual coincidence needs to be explained. Let us recall who were the participants in that incident. On the one hand, units of the occupation troops whose task amounts to saving Russian culture and suppressing the national liberation movement, and on the other hand, criminal organizations that have attached themselves to the national movement and whose ties with the corrupt mafia, deprived of power and dreaming of the restoration of the past, are obvious. It is natural that a certain agreement could be made between these two forces united by common goals.

The Shavnabada incident is a direct evidence of such an agreement. Let us assume that it became known to the Army in Shavnabada, that the operation to neutralize the Mkhedrioni was being prepared. What assistance could the Army render in that case? Mr. Dzhaba Ioseliani is not [word indistinct] to look for asylum in a military unit. His mission is entirely different and his reputation needs to be protected in a different way. In the given case, the best way out is to stage a spectacle similar to the incident in Shavnabada in order to confront the authorities with a difficult choice and prevent the fulfillment of the action that was planned in order to stabilize the situation.

Well, the occupation forces surrounded the Georgians and began to shoot at them—at the representatives of the national movement. If the authorities had opposed the Army and demanded that the encirclement be removed, it would have been necessary to give up the task of neutralizing the Mkhedrioni members who have been turned into national heroes. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to avoid being labeled as collaborationists who were doing everything to support the cause of the opposition. It is to the credit of the authorities, that in this case they made the only right choice, having condemned the actions of both the Mkhedrioni and the occupational Army, and then, in spite of everything, carried on with the scheduled operation. It must be pointed out that, on the same day, 18 February, [words indistinct] Mr. Zviad Gamsakhurdia, fully exposed the mechanism for the above provocation. It is time for those who are planning dirty provocations similar to the Shavnabada incident to understand that the national government will succeed in deciphering their machinations again. The sentence [prigovor] of history will be carried out without fail. There is a force in Georgia that is capable of defeating their [occupational forces] cause by political, but not only political, means. The Georgian nation is this force. The confidence on the part of the nation becoming genuinely democratic as a result of multiparty elections is the enormous capital of the present Government of Georgia.

Militia Disarmed as 'Precautionary Measure'

*PM2502084391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
21 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2*

[Valeriy Reshetnikov report: "A Farewell to Arms!"]

[Text] The POSTFACTUM agency has reported that in an appeal published by the newspaper VESTNIK GRUZII Tengiz Singua, chairman of the Georgian Government, has accused the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] of "disarming" the republic's militia.

By order of the USSR minister of internal affairs, the appeal states, 4,393 assault rifles and 14 machine guns were removed from the Georgian MVD's emergency stocks, and 2,005 assault rifles and 129 machine guns were removed from republic MVD subunits.

This IZVESTIYA correspondent turned to the Union MVD for an explanation. Eduard Ryazanov, first deputy chief of a USSR MVD main administration, replied that two years ago the ministry reviewed the so-called statutory norms [normy polozhennosti] for authorized weapons. The number of automatic weapons in all internal affairs organs has been considerably reduced. This precautionary measure is linked with the increasingly frequent cases of attacks on militia subunits aimed at seizing weapons and specifically with the events of two years ago in Sukhumi.

More Armed Groups Disbanded; Weapons Seized

*LD2202234991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
2230 GMT 22 Feb 91*

[Text] According to a report from the Georgian Republic, measures directed at the confiscation of weapons and disbandment of armed formations continue. Eight illegal armed formations have been disbanded by internal affairs bodies over the past few days in various regions of the republic, and 43 members of the Mkhedrioni paramilitary organization have been detained. Trucks and cars of various types—which had been stolen, their number is to be established—one armored troop carrier, as well as submachineguns, pistols, rifles, and ammunition were confiscated from people who have been detained.

Georgian Government Issues National Guard Law

91US0314A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 21 Feb 91 p 4

[Article by V. Simonenkov: "Deserters Will Go Into the Guard?"]

[Text] The newspaper VESTNIK GRUZII—the publication of the republic's Supreme Soviet—has published a law on the introduction of amendments to the republic's Constitution. It deals in particular with the creation of military formations and the service to be carried out in them. In Article 30 it says that national military formations are obligated to defend the interests of the republic and repulse any aggression and civil war. A series of Supreme Soviet decrees have been adopted concerning conscription and the system for serving in the republic's internal forces-national guard.

The decree on conscription of youth in 1991 notes: "To satisfy the request of servicemen who have voluntarily left the ranks of the Soviet Army and to enlist them into the ranks of the internal forces-national guard of Georgia." Citizens who have reached the age of 18 by the day of conscription and who do not have any right to an exemption will be conscripted into active service in these forces. The republic's television has already broadcast a report from an induction center where work has already begun. Training of the recruits will be conducted by militia employees and former servicemen.

It is believed that the president of the USSR will give an evaluation of the legislative acts adopted by the Supreme Soviet of Georgia. As for the decision to enlist servicemen into the new formations who have voluntarily left their units, criminal proceedings will be brought against every instance of desertion from the ranks of the Soviet Army, we were informed at the Main Military Procuracy. In the event that they voluntarily return to their units, military commissariats, or military headquarters, the servicemen will be cleared of criminal charges.

Is that not worth considering?

Georgia Anti-Army Rally 'Consequences' Feared

PM1902120391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[Report by L. Arshantsev: "Rally Will Nevertheless Take Place"]

[Text] As already reported in the press, the Georgian National Independence Party headed by I. Tsereteli intends to hold mass anti-Army actions during the period 15-23 February. This has had considerable public impact. But on this occasion there is no polarity of opinions on the pages of the local mass media.

Judging by the selection of readers' letters published by the newspaper VESTNIK GRUZII, the alarm felt by District Commander Colonel General V. Patrikeyev about possible unpredictable consequences from the actions staged by Tsereteli has found support "from below," albeit with provisos such as "The Kremlin is only waiting for a reason... So it is better not to tease the bear..."

The attempts to play the anti-Army card in this difficult period for the republic have been sharply condemned by Z. Gamsakhurdiya, chairman of the Republic of Georgia Supreme Soviet. Speaking at a meeting of members of the Helsinki Union rayon organizations board, he stressed in particular that the action planned by National Congress parties for 23 February at the Transcaucasus Military District headquarters "is a provocation designed to produce Army action against the lawful, democratically elected authorities of Georgia."

And what is Tsereteli's own opinion? In the newspaper SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA he stated that the occupation troops should immediately leave Georgia and that the Georgian National Independence Party itself could carry out talks on deoccupation with the Kremlin, and in a matter of days, moreover. Here he rejected the possibility of provocations against the military on Soviet Army and Navy Day by people who think like him. He even called on the commander of the Transcaucasus Military District to personally take part in the rally at the district headquarters building.

So will the rally itself take place? Yes, it will, Tsereteli asserts. It will be held at midday 23 February outside the Movie House, but only Georgian National Independence Party members and those who freely support their position will then make their way to the headquarters.

Voronin-Led Commission Arrives in South Ossetia

LD2202201491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] As we have just been told by the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, a government commission, headed by Comrade Voronin, has arrived today in S. Ossetia.

Report on Continued Violence in South Ossetia

AU2202180391 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1445 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] From 1700 GMT on 21 February until the morning of 22 February, the Ossetian extremists shot at the headquarters of the Georgian militia, the traffic inspection station, and the village of Tamarasheni. Even though the shooting came from the direction of the Tskhinvali cemetery and residential areas of the city, the workers of the Tskhinvali city militia department tried to accuse the Georgian militia of being first to open fire.

Fortunately, Aleksandr Kravtsovtsev, head of the provisional press center of the USSR Ministry of Interior, who happened to be in our headquarters, confirmed the fact that the extremists were the first to fire. On 21 February, a unit of the USSR Interior Ministry troops removed four kg of explosives in the (?Zhava) rayon.

They also handed over to the investigation agencies of the Georgian Interior Ministry parts of those rockets and mines that had been used by the extremists on 17 February in the shooting on the village of (?Shveri) in the Tskhinvali rayon.

South Ossetian Soviet Asks for Republic Status

PM2202172191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Feb 91 First Edition p 3

[Correspondent Lieutenant Colonel A. Semenyaka report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Deputies' Stand"]

[Text] Tskhinvali, 18 Feb—The first session of the South Ossetian Soviet of People's Deputies, first convocation, was held on 14 February. It discussed the following questions: the setting up of committees and commissions; an appeal to the USSR Supreme Soviet session about the abduction of T. Kulumbegov, chairman of the soviet of people's deputies; the work of oblast banks in the state of emergency conditions; and an appeal to the USSR Supreme Soviet session about the Republic of Georgia's failure to implement the USSR presidential decree of 7 January 1991.

The latter appeal states inter alia that, by approving the USSR presidential decree, people's deputies are showing themselves willing to put its requirements into practice. But, at the same time, the Republic of Georgia is permitting flagrant violations not only of the USSR Constitution but also of human rights with regard to a substantial proportion of South Ossetian territory and Ossetian people. The republic leadership's actions in the region aim to overthrow Soviet power. It is completely ignoring the USSR presidential decree and has no wish to resolve the conflict by political means. The economic, energy, information, and transport blockade is continuing. Consequently, the session approved the earlier adopted decision to transform the South Ossetian Oblast into the South Ossetian Soviet Republic. It has requested that the USSR Supreme Soviet discuss this matter when concluding the new Union Treaty, and also introduce a state of emergency throughout South Ossetia, using USSR Internal Affairs Ministry internal troops for this purpose.

The abduction of T. Kulumbegov, chairman of the South Ossetian Soviet of People's Deputies, by Major General of Militia G. Vantaliani, commandant of the state of emergency region, on 29 January this year is a flagrant violation of human rights and deputies' immunity as representatives of ethnic minorities. The soviet of people's deputies session decided to ask the USSR Supreme Soviet to give a political and legal assessment of this unconstitutional act and instruct the USSR Prosecutor's Office to take measures to secure the immediate release of T. Kulumbegov and bring charges against the parties responsible.

When discussing the work of oblast banks, people's deputies said that the forced termination of banking operations is having a detrimental effect on the activity of all sectors of the economy in the region. It was decided to immediately resume banking operations in order to create normal conditions in industry, agriculture, and the social sphere. Banking operations are now severely hampered, however. During a visit to the oblast by Georgian Internal Affairs Ministry personnel all bank documents were destroyed, safes thrown open, and official seals stolen. A considerable sum of money was removed from depositories without the knowledge of local authorities.

The session outlined measures to resume banking activity, determine the amount of material damage caused, and ensure first and foremost the payment of state pensions and the wages of people who work at vital enterprises and establishments.

'Constructive Dialogue' Held on South Ossetia

LD2302104791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent O. Bobin, including recorded interview with Sh.G. Abzianidze, chairman of the Georgian Supreme Soviet's information and prognosis center, and K.M. Tsagolov, chairman of the committee for aid to the peoples of South Ossetia; place, date not given; from the "Vremya" newcast]

[Text] The situation in South Ossetia remains tense. The situation is also complicated by Tskhinvali being under an economic and energy blockade. The streams of refugees to North Ossetia and areas of Georgia have increased. The least well-protected sections of the population—women, the elderly, and children—are practically without medicine and medical services. South Ossetian people's deputies spoke about this at a news conference for Soviet journalists. Representatives from Georgia also participated in the news conference.

[Bobin] At the Soviet Peace Committee, at the initiative of people's deputies, participants in the events gathered. Who does not know from photographs and inadequate newspaper reports that trouble has come to South Ossetia? It has touched everyone personally—both Ossetians and Georgians, who are sitting behind the long table.

It is perhaps for the first time in several months that they are so close to each other—those who have opposed each other—and perhaps some of them even held weapons in their hands not long ago. But when answers to the journalists' questions began, it became clear that this is difficult and dramatic for both peoples, who—and there were historical digressions here as well—lived in friendship for several centuries. At times emotions overflowed, but nevertheless the speeches calling for mutual understanding were convincing.

For the first time in a long period, two opposing sides have begun to conduct a very constructive dialogue at one table. There were very serious speeches here from both sides. The two peoples have not stopped respecting each other?

[Abzianidze] Well, we probably have not stopped respecting, but it must be said that relations are very complicated just now.

[Bobin] Will it be possible to find mutual contacts for genuine cooperation?

[Abzianidze] Well, we probably have not stopped respecting, but it must be said that relations are very complicated just now.

[Bobin] Will it be possible to find mutual contacts for genuine cooperation?

[Abzianidze] If the South Ossetian side will agree on this, then we are prepared. I have said and I want to repeat, that we have several times proposed to them, the South Ossetian side, such a dialogue, and a search for a way to settle this conflict, but unfortunately they are so far refusing.

[Bobin] And your point of view?

[Tsagolov] Well, in the first place, with regard to respecting. I feel categorically that both the Georgian and South Ossetian people respect each other. They observe these events with pain. Both peoples. That is in the first place. Second, I am always in favor of constructive dialogue.

[Bobin] I got the impression that hope has appeared—people are tired, and are seeking a path to cooperation—and that an end can be put to the confrontation.

Avalanches Cut Supply Line to South Ossetia

LD1802210491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent I. Tobolova, from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] Humanitarian aid is continuing to arrive in Vladikavkaz [South Ossetia] from neigboring oblasts, but the transport of freight has been halted due to snow avalanches blocking the road.

[Tobolova] The Transcaucasus Motor Vehicle Highway [Transkam] is today the only route by which humanitarian aid is being delivered to Tskhinvali. Built over 1,000 meters above sea-level, this road was commissioned as a seasonal road, but because of the blockade of South Ossetia, the route is being used even in the most difficult conditions of winter. The Motor Vehicle Road Service, the State Vehicle Inspectorate, and the Sevkavkazenergo [North Caucasus Power Engineering] Service, which ensures electricity to the Kvaisi mine in South Ossetia, are operating virtually around the clock. In order to help the inhabitants of the region, the staff of these services are constantly risking their lives: there are over 70 avalanche-danger sections along the route. Last night, while carrying out their official and civic duty, Oleg Ivanovich Solovyev and Kazbek Gulasovich Isayev, workers of the Sevkavkazenergo administration in Vladikavkaz, perished in an avalanche: They too became the innocent victims of the exhausting confrontation in South Ossetia.

Traffic along the Transkam has from today been temporarily halted, which means that dispatch of aid to Tskhinvali is being held up. There is still no lighting, heating, or water in the town, but with the help of a military mobile electricity generator, the bread factory has at last started operating. Flour has been delivered along the Transkam. According to information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, last night solitary shots were heard in Tskhinvali; and in the village of (Vakhtani) an inhabitant of Ossetian nationality was killed, and some people were injured.

Tajik Supreme Soviet Adopts New Legislation

LD2202225991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The session of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] Supreme Soviet is at work today. Six out of 32 questions on the agenda have been considered. Five laws have been adopted: On the destatification and privatization of property in the Tajik SSR, and on taxes from enterprises, associations, and organizations, and others. Deputies have begun discussing, in a second reading, the draft of a very important and essential law—on local self-management and local economy in the Tajik SSR.

Central Asia

Kazakh, Kirghiz Presidents Sign Cooperation Treaty

PM2402142391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

["Official" report by correspondent T. Yesilbayev: "Friendship Treaty Signed"]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 18 Feb—N. Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, and A. Akayev, president of Kyrgyzstan, signed a Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation Between the Kazakh SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] and the Republic of Kyrgyzstan here today.

In this important document the sides advocate the renewal of the USSR state system on the basis of a union of sovereign states and recognize the republics' sovereignty, their territorial integrity within the existing borders, and equal human rights and freedoms irrespective of nationality, religion, and other differences.

The treaty signed by the leaders of the two fraternal republics also notes that the sides will grant one another most-favored status in the solution of economic questions.

Writer Fears Kazakh 'Constitutional Monarchy'

91US0298A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 13 Feb 91 p 1

[Article by correspondent Yuriy Kirinitsiyanov: "Alma-Ata Is Living on Hope"]

[Text] Alma-Ata—Following the events in the Baltic, phone calls to my apartment have become increasingly numerous. Friends from other cities in the country are worried: How are things with you?

Everything is all right with us, I reply. No rallies, no strikes. The tanks are in the training areas and not in the squares. Then I hang up the phone and begin to reflect. You can't really say everything on the phone...

I am a "Russian-speaker," the son of a Moldavian father and Ukrainian mother, and have lived all my life in Kazakhstan. For 20 years now I have been "wandering" its cities and villages. I have also had occasion to visit other republics. I am convinced that, were there a hospitality competition, Kazakhs would be able to claim one of the top prizes. Cordiality and heartfelt kindness are in the blood of the Kazakh.

But then, out of the blue—December of '86... Kazakhs and representatives of other nationalities who had coexisted peacefully on this land came together in dangerous confrontation. Now all of this is behind us, thank God. But the anxiety remains. At rallies—infrequent at present—nationalist-oriented slogans resound. On the other hand, "autonomists" in East Kazakhstan and Uralsk Oblast have gathered strength. Radicals from among the Russian-speaking population are demanding that Kazakhstan's borders be changed. All of this is unnerving to people—and not just Kazakhs...

Then here Nazarbayev arrives on the political scene. An individual shaped during the stagnation years, in the thick of the Kunayev apparatus, he won glory as a progressivist able to take into account the interests of various nationalities. The president is gradually drawing an ever-increasing number of people into the stream of his transformations. Here is the most recent evidence of this. Free economic zones will soon spring up in Kazakhstan—in Guryev, Mangistau, Dzhezkazgan, and East Kazakhstan Oblasts.

Talks were held during Nazarbayev's visit to the United States on extending credits and accomplishing joint economic projects. A stable sociopolitical environment is not the least consideration attracting Americans to Kazakhstan. Agreement has already been reached, for example, on joint extraction of oil in Tengiz. Upon Nazarbayev's invitation, the post of vice chairman of an economic commission of experts to be headed by the president himself will be occupied by U.S. businessman Jan Bang.

What else is attractive about N. Nazarbayev? His openness, readiness to engage in dialogue, and ability to compromise.

But there are signals which put us on guard as well. Having dared at another time to throw down a challenge to the powerful Kunayev clan, President Nazarbayev can now be encouragingly silent when praises are sent in his direction. Certain Supreme Soviet deputies are saying that although the president is a "progressivist," the republic is creeping toward "constitutional monarchy..." Nazarbayev recently demanded that a central newspaper correspondent be deported from the republic. He had allegedly divulged information intended only for deputies of the republic Supreme Soviet?! Well, what about glasnost? It is alarming that in the president's circle there is a clear absence of impressive, independent personalities, people who are not afraid to object.

Left and right, black and white, tones and semitones. Life... It's a good thing life is moving along peacefully in our Alma-Ata, and that people are living on their hopes for the future. They are awaiting major political and economic reforms in the interests of our working man. They are tying these in with Nazarbayev...

I would be happy to respond by telephone: Alma-Ata, 616018.

New Kirghiz Oblast Elects First Secretary

PM2402141391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 20 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "By Secret Ballot"]

[Text] Bishkek, 19 Feb—An organizational question was examined today at a party conference of the newly reinstated Talas Kirghiz Communist Party Obkom [oblast committee].

As the result of a secret ballot A. Kenesariyev, who worked previously as director of the "Dzhergetalskiy" state farm, was elected first secretary of Talas party obkom.

The conference was addressed by A. Masaliyev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Kirghiz Communist Party Central Committee.

Kirghiz Parties Advised To Buy Out Lenin Museum

PM2202151991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Ryabushkin under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Proposal by the President of Kyrgyzstan"]

[Text] Bishkek—At a meeting with representatives of people's associations, parties, and social movements who asked him to provide them with facilities to house their organizations, President A. Akayev proposed that they should collect money and buy from the CPSU Central Committee the building of a branch of the V.I. Lenin Museum in the republic's capital.

During the conversation, the following idea was voiced: To try and acquire Communist Party property legally, on the basis of an agreement, and transfer it to the Peoples' Friendship Center.

The CPSU has a high standing in the republic, but the museum-palace has long been a kind of reproach to the former and current leadership of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan. People cannot forgive Turdakun Usubaliyev for spending hundreds of millions of rubles belonging to a poor people on this marble edifice, or Absamat Masaliyev for not making up his mind to hand over a building that is in fact empty.

Kirghiz President Cited on Union Treaty

PM1502121391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with Kirzhiz President A.A. Akayev by correspondent A. Ladin; date and place of interview not stated; first paragraph is introduction: "We Have Made Our Choice"]

[Text] A.A. Akayev, president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan [Kirghizia], answers our correspondent's questions.

[Ladin] Askar Akayevich, as is well known, Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan are holding active consultations among themselves regarding the signing of the Union treaty. It is entirely possible that it is these republics which will take the initiative and become the first subjects of a renewed federation. It would be interesting to know why Kyrgyzstan is taking no part in this process.

[Akayev] There are no reasons of principle here. Our republic's legislature and the Kyrgyzstan people are unequivocally voicing their opinion on the need to retain the Union and we are seeking the speediest signing of a treaty leading to the consolidation of our state on the basis of a renewed federation.

We know of the talks between the Union's four largest republics. And in principle we could take part in these consultations. It is true that there has been no invitation. But Kyrgyzstan is prepared to join in this process at any stage because we share the very idea of the need to conclude a Union treaty. Here our positions remain unchanged.

[Ladin] The debate on the Union treaty began long before you became president. The republic of which you are head recently acquired a new name. In this connection I have a question: What fundamental changes have taken place in Kyrgyzstan's approach toward the draft Union treaty?

[Akayev] Basically we have approved the draft. It is true that for our part we have made several proposals. For instance, on the need for a two-stage signing of the treaty. Initially its economic part and then its political part. We also believe it important that the powers of the Union and the republics be more clearly demarcated and that the inviolability of the republics' borders be recognized by all subjects of the renewed federation.

As for the change of name, it in no way alters the republic's attitude toward the new Union treaty. Incidentally, about the name. Some people have been in a hurry to reproach us for the fact that this is apostasy inasmuch as the words "Soviet" and "socialist" have been removed from the republic's name. I must say that there there is nothing criminal here. I personally remain a convinced communist. I joined the party at a sufficiently mature age and I do not intend to betray its ideals. There are also many Communists among those who voted for a change to the republic's name. To confirm that there has been no change in the political platform of myself as president for one, I can add that party members have taken key posts in the newly formed cabinet of ministers. I myself am a member of the CPSU Central Committee and a member of the republic communist party Central Committee. I work in constant contact with the leadership of the republic's communist party. I rely on healthy forces in the party organizations.

Now I shall complete my thought about the republic's name. After all, what essentially happened? The republic has acquired presidential rule. Our Supreme Soviet was the first in the Union to state at legislative level the real division of state management and local self-management. In this connection it was necessary to make the name more specific. Since it had gotten to that point, states where it is essentially dictatorial, antipopular regimes which rule have called themselves socialist. The majestic and noble word was used to conceal lawlessness in our country too. I shall say frankly that people had lost faith in the promises made to them—words sounded, but there were no results. We decided that the goals of socialism, guaranteeing a dignified, happy life for each person, remain the main ones for sovereign Kyrgyzstan.

[Ladin] Are you sure that with the signing of the new Union treaty a stage of political and economic stabilization will begin for our long-suffering state which has grown utterly tired of upheavals?

[Akayev] I shall reply firmly that I am sure. Only it would do no harm immediately to back up the new Union treaty with legal mechanisms regulating its unswerving fulfillment. Why do I stress that? Because I can see how the so-called horizontal treaties signed by our republic are not being fulfilled by everyone in a disciplined manner. I suppose that the times of economic chaos we are living through have generated in some people a syndrome of noncompulsion. And what can be the worth of contracts and agreements, for instance, if the partners treat them without respect?

[Ladin] Should we understand that the changes for the better will begin in Kyrgyzstan only after the signing of a new Union treaty?

[Akayev] I would like to be understood correctly. Indeed, it is extremely necessary for us to rapidly restore economic ties with various enterprises of the Union and to rid the republic's economy of uncertainty and the endless shortage of now one thing, now another. That is, without waiting for instructions from the center, without repeating the errors of the Union government, we must have our own economic concept which considers our local national features and the traditions here and even the republic's purely geographical position. It is no longer possible to conduct matters blindly, following prompts. That line on the part of the former leaders led to considerable distortions. For instance, we take our raw material to be processed God knows where, while everything necessary is imported from other republics for the Union ministries' enterprises constructed in our republic. Specialists also come from outside. Where are our people, especially young people, to work?

Today we are making substantial amendments and are changing a lot. In brief, we are not waiting for better times to come of their own accord.

Another thing. The time has come to radically alter the obsolete power structure. We must make it flexible, strong, and effective. We have formed a cabinet of ministers. Management structures are being not only rejuvenated but also I would say made more intellectual. The formula for this work is as follows: youth augmented by knowledge and experience. For instance, as you probably know, German Serapinovich Kuznetsov has become our vice president. He was born in 1948, completed a research studentship at the CPSU Central Committee Academy of Social Sciences, and is a candidate of economic sciences. The post of prime minister has been taken by Nasirdin Isanovich Isanov, born in 1943 and also a candidate of economic sciences. I could continue the list of government members who represent the type of leaders of the new formation. I shall not conceal the fact that we pin great hopes on them.

I should also like to stress that our cabinet of ministers could also be called a cabinet of national consensus. The cabinet of ministers has been formed in such a way that representatives of different nationalities and social groups are working in it today. It was important to create an authoritative organ of management enjoying the trust of various strata of the population.

As president I can see for myself two paramount tasks. The first and more important is the attainment of civil peace and general national consensus in the republic and it is essential to definitively remove tension in interethnic relations. After the well-known tragic events in Osh Oblast and the youth riots in Frunze. [sentence as published] Long-term consequences have remained. There is a trend toward the improvement of the situation, but we are still a long way from the full solution of the problems. Time is needed to restore trust among people.

The second task is to boost Kyrgyzstan's economy. As I was saying, today it is in a very deep crisis. For the current quarter the republic has been able to conclude only 83 percent of contracts for necessary deliveries. Since 1985 there has been a drastic increase in the volumes of uncompleted construction. There are 140,000 with no employment in the national economy. Just these symptoms of the illness of our national economy make it possible to understand what a heavy burden has been inherited from the republic's previous leadership both by me as president and by the new Government of Kyrgyzstan. We do not want to travel the old path, we are seeking our own path of progress. There are many people who think like me and my closest comrades. Our task is to rally all democratically minded citizens of the republic. To create and form a unique center which would maintain a balance between left and right, radicals and conservatives. In a word, a social nucleus which would act in the interests of unification and not antagonism. We do not need the polarization of society along national lines, which they have not managed to avoid in the Baltic. We will do everything to avoid it, seeking the solution of acute issues on the basis of the principles of consensus. In the future Union it is of course essential to have a substantial contribution from our republic. We would like Kyrgyzstan to be a worthy partner—strong and reliable. We shall achieve that. We know how to do it.

[Ladin] I have heard it said that various statements have been heard in the republic's parliament regarding approaches toward the solution of defense questions within the system of the renewed Union. What is the definitive decision?

[Akayev] Indeed, some deputies suggested having our own republican army. But that is absurd. That is why the overwhelming majority of deputies expressed themselves in favor of transferring questions concerning the state's defense to the Union government's authority. I am sure that all the republic's realistically minded citizens adhere to that position. In Kyrgyzstan our Army is loved and honored. Our draftees go eagerly to serve in the Armed Forces. Suffice it to say that the fall draft took place in an organized manner. All those who were to take over from their senior comrades are fulfilling their military duty with dignity and honor. They are serving in various corners of the country. People from Kyrgyzstan can be met today among the military seamen, the paratroopers, and the missile forces. In brief, the boys serve where necessary. I approve of that.

I take this opportunity to send all servicemen from my land ardent greetings and congratulations on Soviet Army and Navy Day.

In the very near future we intend to send a delegation from the republic to the USSR Defense Ministry. I should like to coordinate with Marshal of the Soviet Union D.T. Yazov a number of questions on which we have our own views, for instance we should like to agree that the redeployment of units and the movement of troops on our territory should take place with the unconditional coordination of these actions with the republican government. A certain proportion of draftees go to serve in military construction units. We are interested in some of them working at our own national economic establishments. Understandably, the provision of facilities for the military construction subunits and their supply with everything necessary and also with a work area and materials for the republic is not that simple today. But some compromise solutions are probably possible.

[Ladin] The country is on the eve of the referendum about the Union's future fate. What is your forecast regarding its results?

[Akayev] I think our country will remain an integral state. The Union will be concluded. It has justified itself.

Turkmen Premier Disputes Report on Oil Leasing

PM1902112391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Interview with Kh. Akhmedov, Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic Prime Minister, by correspondent V. Kuleshov; date, place of interview not given; first four paragraphs are introduction: "Turkmen Prime Minister Disputes UPI Report"]

[Text] On 29 January, the day before the opening of an international congress in Houston which would be bringing together businessmen and heads of industrial companies and firms in oil and gas exploration, extraction, and processing from the United States, Europe, Australia, and Japan, UPI carried a sensational report.

We now quote that report: "On Tuesday 29 January representatives of Turkmenia—a republic rich in energy resources—communicated their plans to adopt proposals from international oil companies on leasing out oil and gas fields for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union.... The sale of licenses has been approved by the USSR central government and by republic bodies.

"Turkmenia is offering for lease some 90,000 square km of oil- and gas-rich territory. According to Kh.A. Akhmedov, chairman of the Turkmen Council of Ministers, the parcels of land up for lease are 100 square km in area. They are in a vast desert territory and are rich in resources...."

Just how true is this UPI report? Can it really be that for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union the Turkmen leadership is giving foreign firms the right to work its republic's resources and use its oil and gas fields? Our correspondent Vladimir Kuleshov asked Turkmen Prime Minister Kh. Akhmedov to talk about this.

"I would like to thank IZVESTIYA for not rushing to publish this report," Khan Akhmedovich said. "It does not correspond to the facts, to put it mildly.

"Now, about leasing. Our republic's oil and gas fields are not being put up for lease. There is a law on this and it clearly states that land, mineral resources, and everything else are the property of the people and are to be used as the people's property. It is possible that, eager for a sensational piece of news, UPI correspondents were confused by the fact that the international conference was for some reason called 'Competitive Leasing of Land with Oil and Gas Potential and Oil and Gas Fields in Turkmenia and Other Regions of the USSR.'

"Leasing was not even discussed at the conference. We discussed a competition involving companies from all over the world with the object of carrying out prospecting and exploration work in Turkmenia. The right to carry out this kind of work was the most important aspect discussed. The competition is a joint project we are undertaking in conjunction with the USSR Ministry of Geology. On instructions from the ministry, the 'Turkmengeologiya' Association and the Institute of Geological Oil Prospecting prepared a package of geological information in advance. Private companies and many state firms have been invited to take part in the competition: Once they have bought the relevant geological information, they will be able to decide whether they want to take the risk of investing in the project. If they find oil or gas here—fine, we can discuss the question of setting up a joint enterprise to work the site; if they find nothing—their investment will have been in vain and no one will be under any obligation.

"If we get as far as setting up joint enterprises, it goes without saying that they will operate in accordance with the laws and legislation in force in the USSR and Turkmenia. We were asked how this will be viewed by the Union. Our reply was that the Union will receive the share stipulated by law...."

[Kuleshov] How have representatives of the business world responded to your offers?

[Akhmedov] They have shown enormous interest. We were made aware of this on 29 January at the news conference which preceded the congress.

[Kuleshov] Which parts of Turkmenia were discussed in Houston?

[Akhmedov] We discussed four large blocks of land covering a total area of 90,000 square km. They will be broken up into 900 parcels of land—each 10 by 10 km, in which prospecting and exploration work will begin. A total of 25 oil, gas, and condensate fields have been discovered in this territory: Fifteen of them are already being worked; four are ready for industrial development; and six are still being surveyed. Exploratory drilling is being carried out at a further 20 sites. A total of 25 structures are ready for seismic work.

In May we will try to agree all the terms of contract with the firms which acquire the right to carry out prospecting and exploration work in our republic. It is proposed to allot land for this work in September.

Uzbekistan Appeals for Ways To Halt Gulf War

LD2502102191 Moscow TASS in English 1005 GMT 25 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow February 25 TASS—The Supreme Soviet of Uzbekistan is deeply concerned about the further escalation of the acute international conflict in the Gulf area, it is pointed out in the appeal of Uzbek parliamentarians to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Soviet president, which was circulated in the Soviet parliament today.

"This bloody war is claiming the lives of innocent people, destroying peaceful towns and villages, unique cultural and historical centres, monuments of Arab and Moslem civilisation,is causing catastrophic ecological damages and leading to the confrontation of peoples and nations," the appeal says.

It is becoming increasingly obvious, the Uzbek parliamentarians note, that not all possibilities have been used to settle the crisis by political means. They urged the USSR Supreme Soviet and "the Soviet president to use their authority and influence in the world community and to take additional steps in order to put an immediate end to the bloodletting and hostilities.

Uzbek Leader on Center-Republic Relationship

PM1302153591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Jan 91 Union Edition p 3

[Interview with Uzbek President Islam Karimov by special correspondent M. Berger; place, date not given: "We Ourselves Must Grasp the Situation Fully—Conversation With President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov"]

[Text] [Berger] Islam Abduganiyevich, one of the main questions today which has yet to be resolved concerns the principles governing interrelations between the center and the republics. As president of one of the biggest republics, what do you consider to be of greatest significance when elaborating these principles?

[Karimov] First of all I want to say that the country's future lies in a union of equal republics or states, if you like, possessing full rights but entrusting some of them to the center. Only we ourselves must understand that many questions simply cannot be solved within the framework of one republic. Such as a unified infrastructure [yedinaya sistema kommunikatsiy], for example, or a unified system of energy supply.

Of course, it is all very well to proclaim and create individual armies, but I believe that maintaining them and, more importantly, equipping them with modern military hardware and paying for the billion-ruble military orders and developments is beyond the capabilities of the vast majority of republics. Not to mention the military-political absurdity and indeed the danger entailed by the existence of 10 or 15 different armies. There is no point today in having individual embassies and representatives abroad in scores of countries; neither, I would suggest, is this really feasible.

Along with the general problems which concern everybody, there are specific regional problems which cannot be tackled all at once. Take our region, for example—I am thinking of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the south of Kazakhstan, where around 600,000 Uzbeks live—where a whole range of questions arises. They are connected above all with the fact that the region's population is set to double to 60 million in the next 15 years. How can these people be provided with work, housing, and water— which by then may be insufficient not only for irrigation purposes but also for everyday needs?

It is the Union which could coordinate and direct efforts by the region's republics to solve these long-term and extremely difficult questions. Up to now these questions have not been examined as a package. Each republic does something on an individual basis, but these problems are common ones and cannot be resolved one at a time. So far, however, there has been no serious fundamental research in this direction.

But, I repeat, we ourselves must recognize the need to delegate these and other functions and rights to the center, otherwise we will never be rid of arguments over the delimitation of powers and jurisdiction.

[Berger] In this connection, how do you rate the chances for signing the Union Treaty?

[Karimov] My opinion is this: If the center had really wanted to sign the treaty from the very beginning, it would have been signed by now. But you know, less than a year ago the country's leadership was frowning on the whole idea of a new Union Treaty. On several occasions this question arose: Why do we need a new treaty when the old 1922 treaty is acceptable to everybody and need only be renewed?

[Berger] But then the draft of the Union Treaty emerged and was agreed during consultations. At the very least, Uzbekistan is numbered among the few republics ready to sign the Union Treaty today.

[Karimov] I want to ask: What resulted from these consultations and why were they necessary at all if, having given our views a token hearing, the powers that be then issue the umpteenth draft of a treaty which remains theirs in essence and reflects none of our suggestions?

It reminded me of a dialogue of the deaf, and such a process of "agreement" can go on forever.

In short, I do not think there are as yet any grounds for supposing that we are ready to sign the treaty now.

[Berger] In one of your speeches you said that there are forces in the center interested in maintaining a certain vagueness. Can you be more specific about the identity of these forces?

[Karimov] They are mainly people who are firmly committed to preserving the remnants of a unitary state and are persistently foisting their concept of the Union on us.

Over the years our system has created a special class—a class of administrators who are convinced that only they have the right to regulate flows of materials and to redistribute resources. These people will never willingly surrender the power they have acquired.

My opinion is this: If we really want to transfer to market relations, not only must we instigate a fundamental reform of Gosplan [State Planning Committee]—the main instrument and stalwart of the administrative system—but we must also abolish the bulk of the union sectoral ministries whose work is merely duplicated at republic level. Believe me, it will be no catastrophe.

[Berger] From the lips of someone who once headed the Finance Ministry and then Gosplan, such a suggestion appears convincing.

Islam Abduganiyevich, returning to the theme of the Union Treaty, I would like to ask: Exactly which proposals were ignored during its preparation?

[Karimov] Uzbekistan must have total control over the republic's natural resources and the product manufactured there. These are basic demands. But the problem is not even whether or not these demands are met. Up to now we have not agreed on the form the Union will take and how many "founders" it will have. The number of those who consider themselves Union republics or who aspire to becoming a Union republic is growing, and this drive on the part of the autonomous entities is actively supported by the Supreme Soviet leadership. Maybe this is a good thing, but if the number of federation subjects keeps growing, what chance if any is there of us ever achieving mutual agreement?

At the same time, tremendous pressure was put on us at the last congress and at the session [not further specified]: The Union treaty has full support—Hurry up and sign it! Above all, efforts were made to turn the Union parliament against us, the republic leaders. Such pressure was imperceptible from afar, but personally I felt it very keenly. All the time the idea was surfacing about how everybody needed the treaty but they—we, that is—were holding it up, refusing to sign it, laying down various conditions...

For example, a representative of "Soyuz" got up onto the platform and without more ado stated unequivocally: Enough talk about sovereignty! Sovereignty would seem to be nothing but the idle invention of individual leaders and not the legal expression of the people's will.

You listen to other deputies desperately identifying themselves with one or other class or social group—we are workers... we are military people... we are drivers... and you wonder at the amount of demagogy in our country, and it is not harmless rhetoric, but extremely aggressive, socially dangerous demagoguery which can lead to nothing but further conflict...

[Berger] Where does the answer lie?

[Karimov] In my opinion, the section in Shatalin's program on the economic agreement was undoubtedly sensible. We fully supported this idea as distinct from other clauses in that program which rank as "shock therapy" but which, I am wholly convinced, are not suitable in the conditions of Central Asia. Until fairly recently it was completely feasible that an economic agreement would be signed and that the Baltic republics would even be a party to it. Now, especially in the light of recent events in the Baltic republics, these opportunities have evaporated.

[Berger] What is your overall view of events in Lithuania and Latvia?

[Karimov] This question has been discussed in our Supreme Soviet. Personally, I cannot accept a situation whereby sovereignty is built on the infringement of some people's rights and the persecution of "foreigners" or those who are "different." But if on the one hand constitutional norms and human rights are being flouted, then on the other a marked impatience is evident. The impatience shown by several political and social organizations which have simply flooded the center with petitions and categorical demands is particularly inadmissible.

Woe betide the society which affords a party or social organization the opportunity to appeal to the army and use force to defend its interests. There will be no justice in such a society, there will be dictatorship. It is through such actions that we pave the way to dictatorship.

[Berger] Islam Abduganiyevich, no doubt it comes as no surprise to you to learn that the Central Asian republics, Uzbekistan included, have a reputation for conservatism. This view is reinforced by the program for the transition to market relations which was ratified recently by the republic Supreme Soviet session. This program envisages a gradual transfer to the market and can in no way be described as radical. You yourself, I believe, spoke out on several occasions in opposition to an accelerated market transition.

[Karimov] I am interested to know why nobody mentions those times when we were "overprogressive." We transferred, albeit under duress, from a feudal system straight to socialism, bypassing capitalism altogether—and to a developed socialism at that. A steady stream of delegations from the Third World was sent to witness our example of how it is possible to move healthily through history skipping several stages at once. But we cannot fool history, and we cannot simply assume and declare a new level of development for our society. To be rid of conservatism we must experience the "agonizing" capitalist stage, which for all its shortcomings transforms the economy and, more importantly, the way we think.

But this idea of "leapfrogging," on which subject many dissertations have been written, had a most serious effect on the republic, producing a one-sided monocultural economy and other distortions in practically all walks of life.

On the other hand, when we are still only talking about privatization, it was here among us "conservatives" that the first private enterprises emerged. We began to privatize stores and the services sphere, and in the past year alone we allocated 170,000 hectares of land to families to rent with the right of inheritance, and we intend to bring this figure up to half-a-million hectares. Given that until recently private plots, occupying 4.5 percent of the total land available, produced up to 40 percent of the republic's food resources, then imagine their "weight" when the proportion of such plots in the republic's land stock more than doubles.

In general, I am convinced that only ownership or the prospect of ownership can be an incentive to work. An individual who needs nothing—neither a home of his own nor a worthwhile income—is simply socially insecure.

Since April of last year we have created 170 rayon service combines with state-cooperative enterprise status, giving them great freedom of action. These combines, which deal in just about everything, do not merely increase the volume of goods and services and develop national small industries, they also solve the employment problem, which is so important for us.

[Berger] Nevertheless, there is a major flaw in these nonradical economic reforms. By granting market freedoms first to one, then to another, and then to a third party, you are discriminating against those who enter the market at a later date. And such discrimination is an almost guaranteed source of social tension.

[Karimov] Theoretically, I agree with you. In the same way as I agree with the idea that it would be good to free all or most prices immediately, leaving it to the pressure of market competition to bring them down. But no matter how much you believe in theoretical precepts, you cannot forget that our social order has created many dependents, surrounded by assurances and laws, who are simply unwilling to participate in a market struggle for a good life. They will not understand such mammoth changes so they will oppose them, and they will do so, I think, quite effectively.

That aside, when selecting a path of market transition we cannot ignore our own specific character. Every morning at work I begin not with politics or economics but with the republic MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] report. Above all, I am interested to know whether or not there have been any clashes, disputes, or casualties, and most important of all the nationality of those involved in any incidents. Peace here does not come easy, and even the "slightest" bloodshed—if I can speak in such terms—can prove immeasurably expensive. All the plans, all the good intentions, and all the reforms will come to nothing if people harbor rage and a thirst for revenge. In Central Asia progress can be made only in conditions of stability.

[Berger] Many of the problems the republic is running up against are connected in one way or another with the name Rashidov. On the other hand, it is being said that in Uzbekistan his role during his years in power is being reexamined and efforts are being made to restore his authority.

[Karimov] The attitude toward Rashidov was defined by the 22d Uzbek Communist Party Congress and the Third Session of the republic's Supreme Soviet, and I share the views expressed there. The basic argument is that Rashidov's personality must not be seen in isolation from the period in which he lived and worked.

I must say that the worst crisis to have befallen our country is not economic but moral. It will be much harder to overcome the consequences of destroying age-old moral beliefs for the sake of ideological considerations than it will the disruption of the economy. After all, it is not so long ago that Communists, especially those in higher positions, could not go to the cemetery to bury their nearest and dearest. Participation in a funeral ceremony was tantamount to mortal sin, and individuals were driven from the party and from their posts. In order to ease their consciences and avoid losing all they had striven for over the years, people entered the hospital or went away on "urgent" assignments even when it was one of their parents who had died. After all that, how can we say that people have little left which they hold sacred?

Moreover, the double standard regarding religion acquired the most distorted forms. The 1.5 million republic inhabitants who can pick up television programs from neighboring Afghanistan saw how the Soviet Army built or restored mosques there. Yet at the same time we were destroying mosques here. And this continued up until 1988.

[Berger] I agree with you, but how does this relate to the Rashidov problem?

[Karimov] Most directly. When 24,000 cotton-related criminal cases were heard, the true culprits and their victims both ended up behind bars on the same grounds. This undermined people's belief in justice. While our leaders regularly reported to Moscow in the style of a cotton "plan": so many thousand arrested, so many expelled from the party...

[Berger] Nevertheless, they were not all convicted for nothing?

[Karimov] True, but this cannot justify the persecution of innocent people. And they were many in number—hundreds of thousands. And it is only recently that we have paid out 1.5 million rubles in compensation to those who were wrongly convicted but have since been freed and reinstated.

[Berger] Be that as it may, to forgive or forget what occurred during the stagnation years and at other times would be to prepare the ground for a possible repeat of the past.

[Karimov] True, but why is it that of the entire Brezhnev cohort it is Rashidov we remember? Others from among his eminent peers are either living a peaceful existence out of the public eye or have even returned to active political life. Such an "imbalance" does not seem right to us.

[Berger] Excuse me if this question appears tactless, but some of your opponents connect your well-known restraint in respect of Rashidov with the fact that you yourself have concentrated into your own hands a multitude of powerful functions: president, head of the republic cabinet, first secretary of the republic Communist Party Central Committee...

[Karimov] In my opinion this can be chiefly explained as a requirement of the transitional period and of the explosive situation which exists in our country and in the republic.

In this sense I also support the reorganization of the administrative structures at union level—it is more responsive to the prevailing situation.

[Berger] You approve of all the measures in the package?

[Karimov] Not quite. For example, I don't fully understand the functions of the USSR president's Control Chamber with its authorized representatives in the localities. This seems to be something akin to a representative of the "white tsar" or the governor general.

We can and will, I hope, live in a strong federation, but for unification on a new basis to take place as quickly and as painlessly as possible, we must establish a partnership based on mutual respect. Both horizontally and vertically.